Sept. 2. 1777.

De Termino Vitæ;

OR THE

TERM

OF

LIFE.

VIZ.

Whether it is fix'd or alterable;

With the Senſe of the *Jewiſh* Doctors, both Ancient and Modern, touching *Predeſtination* and *Free-Will.*

Alſo an Explication of ſeveral obſcure *Paſſages* and *Prophecies* in the Old Teſtament; together with ſome remarkable Cuſtoms obſerv'd by the *Jews.*

Written in Latin by the Famous MENASSEH BEN-ISRAEL *the Jew, and now Tranſlated into* Engliſh.

To which are added, the Author's Life, never before Publiſh'd; and a Catalogue of his Works.

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TO

Colthrop Parker, Esq;

SIR,

I Hope you'll Pardon my Presumption, if I trouble you to read this Book, in your leisure hours (if you have any from doing Good) which I partly Translated, and partly Compos'd in Mine. I must humbly Request another Favour from you, and that is your Protection (if it is not an Encroachment) because you are qualifi'd to Judge of the Performance, and (if you approve of it) to defend me a-

gainſt the unmannerly Cenſures of ill-natur'd Men. I take this Opportunity likewiſe, publickly to acknowledge my great Obligations both to you, and your good Lady, whoſe extenſive Charity, and exemplary Devotion, prevent my juſt Commendations of her to the World. The fulſome Flatteries which uſually fill the Dedications of indigent, cringing Authors, oblige me not to diſplay your Vertues, and Accompliſhments, which have been conſpicuous, both in our own, and Neighbouring Countries. It was the Opinion of the moſt Learned *Rabbins*, (as *Menaſſeh Ben-Iſrael* informs us in this Treatiſe) That a Man's Life might be prolong'd by meditating

tating on God's Law, and keeping his Commandments; now ſince this ſeems highly probable, I have good Reaſon to believe, you may religiouſly expect as long, and as Happy a Courſe of years, as ſome of your pious Family have arriv'd to. I may without the imputation of Flattery, confidently affirm the ſame of your ſincerely vertuous Lady.

That you may both enjoy, (till a good old Age gently leads you to decay) the ſame Health, and the ſame Comforts you do now, is the hearty Wiſh of,

Your moſt obliged

Humble Servant,

P. T.

The Tranſlator's Preface.

I Doubt not but the World will expect (according to Cuſtom) the Reaſons that induc'd me to *Tranſlate*. Now ſome of them are theſe; 1ſt. My own Diverſion. 2d. Becauſe I imagin'd, that others would have the ſame ſatisfaction, and improvement, that I had in the peruſal. 3d. (and I'll add no more) becauſe the Original is very ſcarce, and not to be purchaſed at any Rate.

I have done ſo much Juſtice to my Author (and no more is to be expected) that as he has expreſs'd himſelf in plain and eaſie Latin, I have endeavour'd to make him ſpeak clear, familiar, and unaffected Engliſh. His thoughts are not very bright in the Original, and therefore you muſt expect no mighty Splendour in the Tranſlation. As his Stile is not very Polite, ſo there is no *la Cadence des Periodes* (as the Frenchman ſays) in mine. As Modeſty and Humility were conſpicuous in his Temper, ſo likewiſe are they diſcernible in the Propoſals of his Sentiments. He delivers other Men's with fidelity and candour, and his own with ingenuity and ſubmiſſion. His Judgment is ſolid, and his Argument ſtrenuous, and if his Reaſons are not ſo fine as other Men's, yet they are juſt and impartial. This

This Treatiſe was begun at the Requeſt of *Jo. Beverovicius* (a Senator and Profeſſour of Phyſick in *Dort*,) who had, not many Years before with ſeveral others, (as *Epiſcopius*, *Merſennus*, *Rivetus*, *C. Barlæus*, *Voſſius*, &c. engag'd in the ſame Controverſie. But not being fully contented with the various Opinions of Chriſtian Writers upon theſe Subjects, he importun'd this Author to inform him likewiſe what the Eminent *Rabbins* and *Talmudick* Doctors ſaid about them; for fear (as he tells us himſelf) it would be a great injury to his Profeſſion, did Men believe, that the Time of their Death was ſo abſolutely determin'd by God, that they could neither die ſooner or live longer than that fatal Period, whether they took the Advice and Preſcriptions of the Phyſicians or not. I muſt confeſs I have omitted in the Tranſlation his numerous Quotations, becauſe ſcarce any Man has half of the Authors to conſult, and if he had, the Advantage would not be very great. Some Men of late have not been very juſt to their Authors, but I declare plainly I believe he is. Some places (but very few) I have not tranſlated, becauſe the Senſe is the ſame in other Parts.

I muſt declare ſomething elſe too, and that is, that I am not of thoſe Men's minds and humour that grow conceited with an Author; and if there be any thing true or

good

good in a Book, are preſently extravagant in extolling it; who pleaſe themſelves with what they do not underſtand, and would fain have all the World admire it with them. I have a great and true reſpect for the Author, and ſome of his Works (perhaps) deſerve as favourable a Reception as moſt of our late Modern Chriſtians. Here is enough in this to improve the Knowledge of a wiſe Man, and very few of thoſe *Rabbinical* Fables, that rather divert, than inſtruct the Reader. I am ſure *Beverovicius* thought it would be beneficial to the Commonwealth of Learning (as he tells this great Author in a courteous Letter) and was highly pleaſed himſelf, to ſee the Opinions of the *Rabbins* and *Cabbaliſts* about this dark Controverſie.

I contentedly expect the Cenſures of a Sett of Men, who value no Performances but their own; but let them empanel a Jury of the ſoureſt Criticks, I bravely deſpiſe their Verdict, becauſe I am ſure of the Benefit of the Clergy. If they find fault with it becauſe 'tis only a Tranſlation, (and that no Vivacity of Wit, Strength of Judgment, Subtilty of Reaſoning, or cloſe Application to Lexicons or Indexes, are requiſite to ſet up a Tranſlator) I ſhall preſently anſwer them, I only made uſe of a little diſcretion in making choice of an Author, that may perhaps be more ſerviceable to the Advance-

vancement of Knowledge, and (pardon me for saying it) Christianity too, than the late stupid Defences for a lewd ill-govern'd Stage; or the abominable Libels of all reveal'd Religion, and of our most holy Faith, that have been publish'd by the perfidious Underminers of them.

Some Men I know will quarrel with me (but not sting me) for letting Women, and part Apprentices know what the *Jews* have said concerning these matters. But if I can improve any Man's knowledge, though 'tis a Cobler's, I shall not refuse to be his humble Servant at Command.

If the bold Maintainers of Mr. *Hobbs*'s Sophistical Principles concerning irrevocable Fate and Necessity, are displeas'd with the Author or the Translator, I'll leave them to be confuted by the Learned Dr. *H. More*, (Immortal. of the Soul. B. 2. c. 3.) or (what is worse) by their *Necessity*.

My Author has divided his Treatise into three Books. In the first he maintains that there is a certain Term of Man's Life, and tells us how this was understood by the Ancient and Modern *Jews*. In the 2d he handles that celebrated Problem, whether this Term is fix'd or alterable. In the 3d he endeavours to shew, how God's Fore-knowledge and Man's Free-will are to be reconciled. I have translated all the Texts of Scripture

pture (quoted by *M. B. I*) according to the last Translation of our Bibles.

Now because 'tis plain that I have some time, and Paper to spare, it may be expected I should declare my own Sentiments about these things. I am sorry I am oblig'd to disappoint these Men, but I will comply so far, as to discover (I have his leave for it) the Opinion of an intimate Acquaintance. Says he, We cannot be too cautious of avoiding that Opinion, which Demure People have entertain'd of God's pre-determining the Acts of our Will, and of absolutely pre-ordaining the means, as well as the end. For this seems to cut of a possibility of Guilt, and a possibility of Innocence; for what possibility is there of abstaining from that Sin, which by God's Determination is acknowledg'd to be inevitable? How can that be a Sin which carries no contrariety to God's Will; as being pre-ordain'd, and so Will'd by him? This Opinion, (continues he) seems to rob us of our Understandings, and Wills, for what use is there of Understandings, if we cannot do what we know, or of our Wills, if we do not Act that voluntarily which we do? How apt are Men when they look upon Christianity as a Chain, only of fatal Causes, and affix all Events to a necessary Concatination of Causes, to throw off all thoughts of a Judgment to come, and so under-

undervalue all Threats which might restrain their Impieties, and all Rewards that might oblige them to Obedience; and so run into those Extreams which are opposite to God's Laws, and irreconcileable to the Civil Constitutions of Men; for he that conceits himself led by such irresistable Decrees, will not only prosecute his own Fansie, (and so transgress) but even hate all Laws, and all those too, who are by Duty oblig'd to punish them for their Extravagancies.

This is all I shall offer now, because I am told (by a very great Man of our Church) in his Discourse of Death, *Sect.* 5. *p.* 186. That these things will be Disputes as long as the World lasts, unless Men grow wiser than to trouble themselves with such Questions as are above their reach, and which they can never have a clear Notion, and Perception of.

The Reason of concealing my Name, is too great to be inserted here, but when I have another Opportunity, I will shew that I am not asham'd of it.

I have presented the World with the best Account of *Menasseh Ben-Israel*'s Life, that I could pick up in his own Writings, or in common Conversation. If any one can oblige me with any thing more remarkable, I hope I shall have room to insert that, and my Thanks in another Edition.

Farewel.

THE LIFE OF *Menaſſeh Ben-Iſrael.*

MENASSEH Ben-Iſrael *was born in* Portugal *about the Year* 1604, *in the Reign of* Philip *the* III. *King of* Spain. *His Father was* Joſeph Ben-Iſrael, *a rich and eminent Merchant. His Mothers Name was* Rachel Soeira, *who was deſcended from an Honourable Family.*

His Father being perſecuted, by the Spaniſh Inquiſition, *for his Religion, and having loſt his Goods, and almoſt his Life, (for he was three times moſt his barbarouſly Tortur'd) privately made*

his Escape to Holland *with his Wife and Children,* Ephraim *and* Menasseh. *Not long after his Arrival,* Menasseh *was committed to the Care of* R. Isaac Usiel, *who instructed him in the* Hebrew *Language; in which he made so great a Proficiency, that at the Age of Eighteen Years, he succeeded his Master in the Synagogue at* Amsterdam, *where he Preach'd and explain'd the* Talmud *for several Years together. Of the exact time of his Marriage, I cannot at present be inform'd: But his Wife's Name was* Rachel, *of the Family of* Abravanel, (*Councellour to the King of* Spain) *whose Pedegree some of the* Jews (*I know not upon what grounds*) *derive from* David. *He had by her two Sons,* (Joseph *and* Samuel) *and one Daughter, nam'd* Grace. *His Circumstances being very low,* (*for his Salary from the Synagogue was not above fifty Dollars* per annum) *he was forc'd to send to his Brother* Ephraim, *at* Brasil, *to put him in a method to mend his Fortunes by Merchandize. In the mean time he apply'd himself to the Study of Philosophy, and the*

Holy

Holy Scriptures, to which he was addicted, even from his Child-hood. He maintain'd a good Correspondence with several Learn'd, and Ingenious Men of his time, and was deservedly Honour'd, and Respected by them, as I shall shew in its proper place. But after he was engag'd (to his unexpressible Grief) in a way of Traffick, he was very much diverted from the Prosecution of his beloved Studies. Great part of his time, was taken up in the Press, for he Printed all his Books with his own Letters, and at his own Expence; so that considering his Attendance in the Synagogue, his Care of the Press, and necessary Employment in his Domestick Affairs, he had no opportunity to discharge the common Offices of Friendship. Notwithstanding all this, (upon an Invitation) he came into England, *in the times of the execrable, and un-natural Rebellion. His stay here was but short, because he did not meet with that Encouragement which he expected. However he had the joyful Satisfaction, to contribute to the Settlement of those of his own Religion in this Country.*

And as I am inform'd, he was once civilly entertain'd by the Protector at his Table; he had frequent Conferences with some of the Eminent covenanting Divines of those unhappy times, but I believe he was too honest, and sincere to approve of their unjust Practices, whatever he thought of their enormous Principles. His fore-fathers indeed had Crucified the True Messias, *whom they call'd* the King of the Jews: *But he must needs be displeas'd with them, who had Martyr'd him, who in some Respects bore the Injuries, and Affronts that were put upon his Great Master.* For they laid to his Charge things that he knew not. *This, I say, might reasonably be disagreeable to him, because it renew'd (as it were) the remembrance of his Predecessors Shame, Cruelty, and Punishment. And he might Fansie, that what they suffer'd for the Crucifixion of one, these might suffer for the Decollation of the other.*

When he departed from England, *he went into* Zealand, *and as I was inform'd (by that most courteous and ingenious*

ous Jew, *Mr.* Gomeſera) *he breath'd his laſt* (*about the fifty third Year of his Age*) *at* Middleborough; *but by the Generoſity of the* Jews *of* Amſterdam, *his Body was brought thither, and decently interr'd at their Expence.*

He left one of his Sons behind him in England, *who married into a Credible Family, but did not long ſurvive his good Father, leaving behind him only one Child. How his other Son and Daughter were diſpos'd of I cannot yet Learn.*

I hope I ſhall incurr no Man's Cenſure, if I preſent the World with a ſhort Character of this great Rabbin. *He was in his Opinion a* Phariſee, (*as it ſeems they are all at this time*) *but of a Temper directly contrary to thoſe, who are deſcrib'd to us by the Evangeliſts. All the time he could ſpare from urgent Buſineſs, he ſpent among the beſt Authors of all Claſſes, as will appear to any one that conſults his Writings. Though he was not a* Gaſſendus *in Philoſophy, or a* Grotius *in Divinity; yet he was reputed the moſt celebrated* Rabbin *of his Age. His chiefeſt Applica-*

tion was to illustrate the Books of the Old Testament, and he has succeeded so well in this Undertaking, that his Works are almost a good Comment upon it. He was always industrious, careful, and frugal; his Apprehension was quick, his Judgment solid, and his Reason not too severe, and subtile. He was a loving Husband, a kind Father, and a peaceable Subject. He was of a modest, sober and affable Temper.

I shall beg Leave to digress into one Instance of this, which was imparted to me by an Honoured Friend. *Being about to make his* Tour *in the united Provinces, he acquainted his Tutor (a Worthy and Learned Fellow of* Queens College *in* Cambridge) *with his Resolution. Upon this kind Information his Tutor requested the Favour of him to purchase two* Hebrew *Books that were very uncommon, and withal added That he thought* Menasseh Ben-Israel *was the likeliest Person to procure them for him, or satisfie him concerning them. Upon this Gentleman's Arrival at* Amsterdam, *he immediately enquir'd out*

this

this Eminent Rabbin ; *and in a little time after made him a Viſit, which was as civilly receiv'd, as paid. He told our* Great Author *the occaſion of his Coming, and deſir'd him (if poſſible) to help him to two* Hebrew *Books, which could not be purchas'd in* England. *He readily comply'd with this Requeſt, and at the ſame time cut theſe Books out of a large Volume, in which they had been bound up, with others of the ſame Language. I need not expreſs the Pleaſure this* Learned Jew *had in granting this Courteſie, or the Gentleman in receiving it, or the great Obligation the ingenious Tutor had to both. But to proceed: The Study of the Scriptures made him paſſionately delight in Devout Contemplations. In Truth, he was a Man of a ſingular Vertue, and Integrity of Mind, and ſeem'd to want no Accompliſhment, but the Faith of a Chriſtian. Several Worthy Men of this Nation, (viz. Dr.* Nath. Homes, *Dr.* Jeſſey, *Mr.* Boyle,) *as well as of his own, and of other Places ſetled a Correſpondence with him, and have*

not been backward to give him juſt Encomiums. But eſpecially that Learned Senator, and Phyſician of Dort, Beverovicius, *maintain'd an intimate Friendſhip with him, as long as he liv'd.*

He was of a middle Stature, and inclining to Fatneſs. He always wore his own Hair, which (many years before his Death) was very Grey; ſo that his Complexion being pretty freſh, his Demeanor Graceful, and Comely, his Habit plain and decent, he Commanded an aweful Reverence which was juſtly due to ſo venerable a Deportment: In ſhort, he was un homme ſans Paſſion, ſans legiereté, mais Helas! ſans opulence.

I cannot but obſerve here (with the Readers leave) that ſome People have unaccountably reach'd out their Malice againſt the Jews, *who were once the only People of God. It is true ſome of them, about Seventeen hundred years ago ignorantly (but barbarouſly) Crucified our bleſſed Redeemer;* Acts 3. 17. 13. 27. *but alas! That perverſe Generation miſerably ſmarted for it, as the Learned* Joſephus

ſephus *in his Wars of the* Jews *faithfully records. I ſhall not pretend to give an Abridgment of his Works, eſpecially after the Endeavours of a late Excellent Author: But I ſhall only briefly diſcover, how and where they were diſpers'd after the Deſtruction of their Great City.*

When their Sins were ripe for Vengeance, God ſent the Roman *Armies, to inflict that Puniſhment which was ſo often foretold. Some of them miraculouſly eſcap'd to* Pella, *others either fell by their Neighbours, or their Enemy's Sword;* 16000 *were ſent to* Rome *at one Time by* Titus, *to augment the Glory and Pomp of his Father's Triumph, and he ſold no leſs than* 100000 *Slaves. Not many Years after,* Adrian *the Emperour ruin'd the whole Country, and tranſplanted many into* Spain; *theſe diſpers'd into* France *and* England, *but were baniſh'd in a little Time from theſe Places. In ſome Ages after they crept into theſe Countries again, but were baniſh'd from* Spain *in the Year* 1500, *and then diſpers'd into* Africk, Italy, Germany, *the Low*

Low Countries, Conſtantinople, *and the Dominion of the* Turk, *where they remain in great Numbers at this Time, and are very often employ'd in the Receipt of Cuſtom, to the great Advantage of the Government. The* Viſiers *and* Baſhaws *have ſuch reſpect for them, that they generally* (*as Sir* Henry Blunt *informs us*) *admit them into their Counſel.* William *the Conquerour brought them out of* Roan *to inhabit here, and* William Rufus *favour'd them ſo far, that he ſwore by* Luke's Face, *his common Oath, if they could overcome the Chriſtians, he would be one of their Sect. They had a Synagogue at the North corner of the* Old-Jury, *which was ſo call'd from the* Jews *living there. King* Henry *the Third founded a* Church and Houſe *for converted* Jews, (*now call'd the* Rolls) *and in a little Time there was a great Number of Converts. They were often perſecuted here in the Reigns of King* John, Henry *the Second*, Henry *the Third, and* Edward *the Firſt, in whoſe Reign* John Peckham *Archbiſhop of* Canterbury, *commanded the Biſhop of* London *to deſtroy all*

all the Jew's *Synagogues in his Dioceſs. And they were likewiſe all baniſh'd about this Time out of* England. *The Inquiſition (that Rack of Men's Conſciences) was firſt introduc'd into* Spain, (*in the Reign of* Ferdinand *the Fifth*, 1478.) *by the eſpecial Procurement of* Don Pedro Gonſales de Mendoza, *Cardinal and Archbiſhop of* Sevil, *occaſion'd by the Apoſtacy of the newly converted* Jews *and* Moors, *who began to return to their old Superſtition. Now this in ſome reſpect had been practis'd before; for in the fourth Council of* Toledo, *A. D.* 639. *in the Reign of* Syſenandus, *the Apoſtatizing* Jews *were compell'd to perſevere in the Chriſtian Religion, leſt the Name of* Jeſus *might be blaſphemed, and the Faith which they had embraced, might by that means become vile and contemptible. This was ratified likewiſe by the eighth Council held at the ſame Place,* A. D. 671. *when* Receſuvindus *Reign'd over the* Goths. *After all theſe Iliads of Afflictions, they remain at this Day ſcatter'd over the Face of the whole Earth, and becauſe they continue peaceable, by*

the

the Connivance of our Laws they are not disturb'd. And good reason, for if (as most learned Men agree) they will all be converted to the Christian Religion, no place can be more proper to promote this Conversion, than a Christian Country. But alas! there are three Impediments to this, especially in Foreign Parts. 1. *The Scandals of the Papists.* 2. *The want of Means to instruct them:* *And,* 3. *The Punishment or Loss, which by their Conversion they incurr. As many Papists are converted to Judaism, as* Jews *to Christianity. Several of our Countrymen, as Doctor* Gouge, *Doctor* Jessey, *&c. have by their Conversation and Charity, piously endeavour'd to begin this good Work. But that which must be most effectual to the Proficiency and Accomplishment of it, is, by letting them see our good Works, and then we may joyfully see them glorifying, not only our Father which is in Heaven, but the Son and Holy Ghost too. Let us not maliciously imagine that they have a natural unsavory Smell, but let us be careful that our Sins do not stink*

in

in their Noſtrils We ought not to miſpend our Time in railing againſt the Jews, *but we muſt mortifie our Sins, thoſe more inveterate Murderers of the Lord of Life and Glory: Our Sins daily ſpit upon him, and bind him, and load him with a Burden much heavier than that of the Croſs. Let us unanimouſly endeavour to advance the means of their Converſion, as well as pray for it. This I am ſure was the devout Practice of the Chriſtians in the Primitive Church; for* Clemens *often takes notice of the Prayers that were offer'd up for the* Jews *in the* Eaſter-Week, Διαλ. 5. c. 12. 14. *Now this Time and this Country may afford us ſeaſonable Opportunities; for I am not a little ſatisfied, that the Obſtinacy and Stiffneſs they were once remarkable for, are almoſt worn off. One odd Fancy they ſtill entertain (which* Menaſſeh Ben-Iſrael *has ſtrongly aſſerted in his* Spes Iſraelis) *that is, That the Ten Tribes which were loſt are now behind the* Caſpian *Mountains, from whence they expect their* Meſſias, *who with Fire and Sword ſhall ſubdue the World, and reſtore their Tem-*

Temporal Kingdom. The Tribes that now remain are of Judah *and* Benjamin, *moſt part of the former being ſettl'd in the Eaſt, the latter in* Germany, Holland, Italy, *and* England. *He that deſires to ſee the Hiſtory of the Rites, Cuſtoms and Manner of Life of the Modern* Jews, *may read* Leo Modena, *a* Rabbin *of* Venice, *tranſlated by Mr.* Chilmead *of* Chriſt-Church *in* Oxon. 1650. *I ſhall conclude with an Exhortation to the* Jews (*beſides my Prayers for them*) *taken out of the* 95*th* Pſalm, Harden not your Hearts, as in the Provocation, and as in the Day of Temptation in the Wilderneſs, &c.

The

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Libri adhuc ſub manibus verſantes, nondum perfecti.

Hiſt. Judaica, vel continuatio Hiſt. F. Joſephi ad hæc uſq; tempora.

De divinitate legis Moſaicæ.

De ſcientia Talmudiſtarum in omnibus facultatibus. Hebraicé.

Nomenclator Heb & Arab.

De diſciplinis Rabbin.

Philoſophia Rabbinica.

Me-

Menaſſeh Ben-Iſrael,

OF THE

Term of Life.

BOOK I.

SECT. 1. SOLOMON plainly declares, that there is a certain Term or Time of Man's life appointed afore-hand, *Eccleſ.* 3. 1, 2. *To every thing there is a Seaſon, and a Time to every Purpoſe under the Heaven. A Time to be born, and a Time to die,* &c. For as he aſſigns a determined Time to all ſublunary things; ſo likewiſe does he attribute the ſame to Life and Death.

That Place of *Job* is remarkable, *Ch.* 7. 1. *Is there not an appointed Time to Man upon Earth?* Moſt of the *Hebrew* Doctors upon this Place agree, that the Time is fixed how long a Man ſhall live. *Job* is more expreſs in another Place, Chap. 14. 5. *Seeing his*

days are determin'd; the number of his months are with thee; thou haſt appointed his bounds that he cannot paſs. Here the Doctors are of the ſame Opinion.

This is likewiſe confirmed another way. *Moſes* ſaith, Exod. 23. 26. *The number of thy days I will fulfil.* And *David*, Pſ. 39. 4. *Lord, make me to know mine end, and the meaſure of my days*, and in the next Verſe, *Behold thou haſt made my days as an hand-breadth:* Where R. *Solomon* comments, As a thing that is meaſur'd with the hand, ſo are the days of Man determin'd. *Solomon* Eccl. 5. 18. *All the days of his Life which God giveth him.* Job 14. 14. *All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.* From whence it is inferr'd, that our Life conſiſts of a certain number of days afore-appointed. And becauſe Life has ſuch a *Term*, to which, (as to a Goal) Man bends his Courſe, hereupon the Scripture makes uſe of this Phraſe, Gen. 47. 29. *And the Time drew nigh that* Iſrael *muſt die*, Deut. 31. 14. *And the Lord ſaid unto* Moſes, *Behold, thy days approach that thou muſt die*, 1 Kings 2. 1. Now what do theſe expreſſions ſignifie, any other than a fixed and ſetled Boundary to which a Man is directed.

To encreaſe and diminiſh pre-ſuppoſes ſome certain Quantity and Number. Now the

the Scripture affirms, That *the fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked ſhall be ſhortned*, Prov. 10. 27. from whence it follows, that Life has a *Term*, and that one Man's is contracted, and another's enlarg'd according to their Works.

Beſides all theſe Places, that have been produced, that in *Samuel* is very obſervable, where *David* ſpeaks theſe words, 1 Sam. 26. 10. *As the Lord liveth, the Lord ſhall ſmite him, or his day ſhall come to die, or he ſhall deſcend into Battel and periſh*; from whence it is very plain, that either Providence, Nature, or Chance may be the Cauſe of a Man's death, as I ſhall ſhew by and by. And it is likewiſe evident, that every Man has a certain day, in which this Life muſt be changed for a better. Theſe things I thought fit to premiſe, that I might eſtabliſh the Truth of what I am about to diſcourſe of.

SECT. 2. Having clearly prov'd from the Sacred Writings, that there is a certain and definite *Term* of Man's Life; I ſhall in the next Place explain, how this *Term* is to be underſtood.

And firſt we muſt know, that wiſe Men do not agree about this thing, but differ in their Judgments, according to thoſe Principles of Science, which they have entertain'd.

tain'd. The Aſtrologers affirm, that the *Term* and continuance of Life depends upon the Stars; and this was the Opinion of *Æſculapius*. Now, ſay they, if the whole Earth receives a vital Energy from the Influence of the Stars, (and for that Reaſon ſome Part is fruitful, and ſome barren) and likewiſe if the Times and Seaſons are determin'd by them, why may not alſo every Man's life and death depend upon them too? Other Men (that think a little cloſer) are of *Ariſtotle*'s mind, and aſſert that the *Sun and Man ingender Man.* And they will have it, that not only the *Sun*, which is the chief of all the Planets, but that all the reſt of the Stars do concurr to ſo Noble, ſo excellent on Effect, as the Formation of Man. Hence they divide the Operations, and various Offices among the Planets. In the firſt Month of Conception, they ſay *Saturn* dries up the firſt *Maſs*; in the ſecond, *Jupiter* kindly prepares and augments it; in the third, *Mars* ſeparates and quickens it, and ſo every Month the Planets execute their reſpective Offices, as may be obſerv'd in *Plato*, *apud Marſil. in Atlan.* l. 3. and *Thomas Aquinas*, *contra Gent.* q 84. From thence it comes to paſs That that *Conjunction* or *Diſjunction* of the Stars which predominates at the Conception of the *Fœtus*, produces the Seeds of future

future Affections, Life and Death, Good and Evil; and they quite diſcard every thing elſe from the diſpoſing of Men's deſtiny. This was the Opinion of the *Stoicks*, who obſtinately maintain'd, that the immutable *Fate* of Men chiefly rely'd upon the Influence and Vertue of the Stars. There are others who attribute all that we have taken notice of, to the Poſition and Efficacy of the Stars, which happens at the Birth, not at the Conception, of the Child; but this is frivolous, becauſe, all of them aſcribe proſperous and unfortunate Events to the Celeſtial Signs.

The *Hebrew* Doctors confeſs, That inferior Bodies act by the Vertue of heavenly ones; and *Maimonides* affirms in his Epiſtles, That there is no one among the Learned *Jews*, or the Philoſophers that doubts of it. Therefore, though they may diſſent about the Creation of the World, (while ſome ſay it is Co-eternal with God, others that it was created out of pre-exiſtent Matter, and others out of Nothing) yet they all agree in this, That the Generation of Sublunary things is effected by the Stars; but what that Vertue of the Stars is, or how it influences the Bodies, or Minds of Men, is ſtill dubious and uncertain. The fore-mention'd *Rabbi* in his Epiſtles ſtiffly denies it; theſe are his Words:

" Some of the Philoſophers, (who admit
" not of Providence) attribute all humane
" Events to Chance, ſome of them to the
" Efficacy of the Stars. On the other ſide,
" ſome referr all to a fatal Neceſſity of the
" heavenly Conſtellations, and will have
" it, that the Riches and Poverty, the
" Proſperity and Adverſity of all Men de-
" pends upon the Poſition and Vertue of
" the Stars; which are incident at the
" time of their Nativity; and this Law
" they averr to be inviolable. Both theſe
" Opinions are very falſe; becauſe, that
" which imputes all to Chance, denies the
" Providence that is ſo much celebrated in
" Holy Writ; that which allows ſo great
" Power to the Stars, and follows judicial
" Aſtrology, is fooliſh. In the firſt place
" (ſays he) I have look'd over all the *A-*
" *rabick* Books that treat of this Science,
" and at laſt diſcover'd it all to be mere
" Vanity and Madneſs. The truly wiſe
" *Græcians* neglected this Study, and none
" of them have written any thing about it,
" The *Perſians* alſo eſteem'd it idle. The
" *Chaldæans*, *Ægyptians*, and *Canaanites*
" only were addicted to this Vanity, be-
" cauſe their Religion conſiſted in it for
" ſome time. Afterwards offering at clearer
Reaſons, he ſays, " That our Law, and all
" the Philoſophers acknowledge Free-will,

" and

" and that Man is endowed with an abſo-
" lute Power of purſuing Good, and ab-
" ſtaining from Evil; as on the other ſide,
" of obeying his ſenſual Appetite, and diſ-
" regarding the Dictates of Reaſon. Now
" if the influence of the Stars is ſo great
" over Men, where is that Liberty? If it
" is impoſſible for Men to avoid the vertue
" and impreſſion of the Stars, why are
" there Precepts? What does it ſignifie to
" endeavour to extirpate vicious Habits,
" and to become vertuous, when Heaven
" had determin'd when we were born,
" what we ſhould be as long as we liv'd?
" If Men's liberty depend ſo much upon
" the Stars, all their Care, and Solicitude
" is to no purpoſe. Therefore ſays *Mai-*
" *monides*, we ought to attribute all this to
" Providence; for Sin is the Cauſe of a
" Man's poverty, and his Repentance may
" make him rich. Proſperity and Adver-
" ſity are to be imputed to every Man's
" works, becauſe we ſee God promiſes Life,
" and Temporal Bleſſings to thoſe that ob-
" ſerve his Commandments. But if it
" ſometimes falls out otherwiſe, that a juſt
" Man meets with Afflictions, we muſt
" ſubmit to God: Becauſe he only knows
" the Secrets of our Hearts, and the Rea-
" ſons why he puniſhes and rewards. We
may now evidently diſcover, how repug-

nant the Judgment of *Maimonides* was to that of the Aſtrologers, and what his Sentiments were concerning judicial Aſtrology.

SECT. 3. A great many very Learned Doctors are of a different Opinion, and unanimouſly aſſert, That ſome Vertue is deriv'd upon New-born Infants from the poſition of the Stars, and that Life and Death, Wealth and Poverty are ordain'd after the ſame manner. This is the *Fate* of the *Jews*, which is call'd by them, *the Ordination of the Stars*; and is uſually prov'd by theſe following Reaſons.

1. It is manifeſt by Experience, that the Prophecies of Aſtrologers commonly correſpond with the Events, and that they have often foretold a ſhort Life, or a long one, a happy or a miſerable one. Therefore theſe things are ordain'd by the Stars.

2. Every one is ſenſible, that the Generation and Corruption of all Sublunary things depend upon the Motion of the Heavens. For we may diſcern, as the Air is more tempeſtuous or calm, ſo it inſinuates it ſelf into Men's Bodies, and as it is attracted for reſpiration, ſo it affects their minds. Therefore without diſpute the Heavens have ſome Power over humane Bodies.

3. The

3. The third Reaſon is drawn from Authority. For the Scripture ſpeaks thus of the Sun, and the Moon, Gen. 1. 18. *And God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the leſſer light to rule the night; he made the ſtars alſo.* Here *R. Moſes Gerundenſis* asks, What is meant by that Dominion? It is that Dominion, ſays he, which the Stars have over the Bodies of Men; upon which they impreſs ſeveral Vertues, according to their favourable or malevolent Aſpect. It is ſaid in the Book of *Judges*, Chap. 5. 20. *They fought from heaven, the ſtars in their Courſes fought againſt Siſera.* Likewiſe in *Iſaiah*, 47. 13. *Thou art wearied in the multitude of thy Counſels: Let now the Aſtrologers, the Stargazers, the monthly Prognoſticators ſtand up, and ſave thee from theſe things that ſhall come upon thee.* Alſo *Job* ſays, Chap. 3. 3. *Let the day periſh wherein I was born, and the night in which it was ſaid, There is a Man child conceived*; where he refers all his Evils, to the time of his Conception, or his Nativity. From all theſe things the Vertues of the Stars are collected. The *Talmudiſts* alſo, *in Tract. Moed. Katam. cap. ult.* ſeem to entertain this Opinion. For they ſay that Children, Life and Food depend upon the Stars. And in another place, they affirm the ſame thing: For there

there Vices and Vertues, are attributed to the Efficacy of the Planets, under which every Man is born; and they take notice of *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, *Mars*, &c. In the ſame place it is diſputed, whether or no the Reaſon of theſe things is to be found out at the Birth or Conception; here their Sentiments are plainly diſcovered to us.

Notwithſtanding all this, we muſt take notice, that although this Opinion may be introduced among the *Jews*, yet they unanimouſly conſent that the Stars do only incline, but not neceſſitate the Will and Choice of good Men. *Bradraſt* (in *bekinat Olam*) an eminent Orator among them, has theſe words; "When, ſays he, You "look towards Heaven, and conſider the "Stars above, never imagine or believe, "that they have any Power over the "Will, as the ancient Aſtrologers fanſied, "for they have no Authority at all over "thoſe things that depend upon Free-will. As to ſuch things which are out of the Power of Man, *viz.* Life, Honour, and Riches, all agree, *That they who obey the Commandments of God are out of the reach of the Planets.* And *R. Moſes Gerund.* ſays, That God is above all, and can Act, See, Diſpoſe of, and Govern all things according to every ones Deſert. For this Reaſon, the *Talmudick* Doctors in one place, deny,

deny, that there is a Planet belongs to *Iſrael*, and in another affirm it. Admitting a Diſtinction, they are both true; for as *Aben Ezra* remarks upon *Exod. cap.* 34. no Planet reigns over the *Jews*, while they obſerve the Law, but when they neglect it. Likewiſe the Prophet *Jeremy* ſays, Chap. 10. 2. *Be not diſmayed at the Signs of Heaven, for the Heathen are diſmayed at them.* He that is deſirous to know more of theſe things, may conſult the 18th. Book, chap. 2. of *Joſephus's Antiquities* of the *Jews*. For where he treats of the Sect of the *Phariſees* (whoſe Opinion I confeſs I am of) he ſubjoyns theſe words. "They "aſcribe all things that are acted to *Fate*, "but however they grant the Aſſent of "Man's *Will*, alledging that God uſes this "moderation, that when all things are "made by his Counſel, yet Man hath the "Liberty of embracing Vertue or Vice. In another place, *B.* 16. *c. ult.* (Diſcourſing of the unhappy Death of *Alexander* and *Ariſtobulus*, the Sons of cruel *Herod*,) he ſays, "It is reaſonable to doubt whe-"ther that Crime is to be charg'd upon "the young Gentlemen, by which they "had long incurr'd their Father's Diſ-"pleaſure and Hatred, or upon the old "King's Cruelty, and immoderate Deſire of "Glory and Sovereignty; or upon *Fortune*,

"whoſe

" whoſe Power the Reaſons of the wiſeſt " Men cannot oppoſe. Hence we are " perſwaded, that ſhe has ſettled before- " hand all humane Actions which muſt " neceſſarily come to paſs; and this is the " Power which we call *Fate*, becauſe " there is nothing but what it can accom- " pliſh. So much for *Joſephus*. Here we may take notice, that by *Fate* he means the Vertue, or Influence of the Planets, and he obſerves notwithſtanding theſe, Man has the *Liberty to be vertuous or profligate*; and a little after, *that no humane Reaſons can reſiſt it's Power*: But Divine and Supernatural ones can, ſuch as fervent Prayers, Alms Deeds, ſincere Repentance, and the like. He that has a mind to ſee a more accurate Diſcourſe upon this Subject, may be ſatisfied by the famous and incomparable *Gerard Jo. Voſſius*, in the Second Book of his moſt Learned Treatiſe of Idolatry.

Now I have ſhew'd the Opinions of our Learned Doctors, and of the Aſtrologers, concerning the influence of the Planets; I proceed to my Diſpute about the *Term of Life*, which according to ſome of the *Jews*, is that which is determin'd by the influence of the Stars. Thus *R. Bahye* very often ſays, *That a Man's Life is decreed by a Planet*, in reference to that of 1 Sam. 26. 10.

Or

Or *his day ſhall come*: But eſpecially the ancient Doctors in *Tanchuma*, are of this Opinion, who by thoſe words in Gen. 1. 14. *and for days and years*, allegorically underſtand the days, and years of a Man's Life, which the Sun and Moon mutually govern. Thus much for the Opinions of the Aſtrologers.

SECT. 4. The Phyſicians are of another mind, for they (following *Galen* and *Avicenna*, the chief of that Profeſſion) maintain, that Life and the Preſervation of a Man's Body, conſiſt in the Harmony and Proportion of the Qualities which reſult from the four Elements, out of which it is compounded, but eſpecially in a due Proportion of *heat and moiſture*. So that a Man lives as long as the natural heat continues; for being of a Fugitive Nature, it conſumes the Radical moiſture, and when that is dry'd up and the other extinct we die; ſo *Avicenna* ſays, *It is impoſſible that we ſhould die, unleſs the Radical moiſture is abſorpt, and the natural heat conſum'd.* According to this Opinion every ones Life depends upon a good Temperament, and from thence Phyſicians can foretell the Diſpoſitions and Manners of Children that are to be born, not by gazing upon the Heavens, as the Aſtrologers do, but by

by obſerving the Fortune that attends the Mother while ſhe is pregnant, but principally that of the Father: For *Hippocrates* affirms, *That Children inherit the Vices and Temper of their Father*; ſo that a Phlegmatick or Cholerick Father, begets a Phlegmatick, or Cholerick Son; beſides, ſays he, The very ſhape of the Fathers is impreſs'd upon their Children. So that all that are born in the Lake *Mœotis*, have large and prominent Heads: And *Ariſtotle* thinks, that the Lameneſs of an Arm, or Leg may be deriv'd upon the Child. There is no neceſſity to aſſert with *Theophraſtus*, That the very Subſtance, and every thing that belongs to the Child proceeds from the Body of the Father, *As the Head, and Hands of the Child, from the Head and Hands of the Father*; but it is enough to know, that Children are like their Parents in their Countenance, Actions, Manners, and, what is ſtrange, in their Infirmities.

There are others that aſcribe the good and bad Conſtitution, to the Vertue of the Planets, which Infants receive by means of the Air at the time of their Birth; and in my Judgment it ſeems probable, becauſe the Sun moves the Elements, from whence thoſe four Qualities flow, in which Life and the Preſervation of the Body conſiſt:

ſiſt: This Definition of the *Term of Life* pleaſes the *Jewiſh* Doctors very much. The Learned *Aben-Ezra* declares his Approbation of it, and expreſſes himſelf after this manner: *We know that there is a certain time appointed for every Man, which laſts in Proportion to the quantity of natural heat and moiſture*; and a little after he adds, That this is the *Term* which *David* ſpeaks of, 1 Sam. 26. 10. *His day ſhall come. R. Joel ben Sueb.* upon thoſe words of *David*, Pſal. 39. 4. *Lord, make me to know my end*, &c. comments thus, *My end, according to my Conſtitution. R. Iſaac Abravanel*, upon the 38th. Chapter of *Iſaiah* ſays, *That a Man's Life is determin'd by his Conſtitution, and the quantity of Radical moiſture.* Thus we ſee, that the *Hebrew* Doctors, and other Authors underſtand by the *Term of Life*, a certain Period, which in one is ſhorter, and in another longer, according to their different Conſtitutions.

SECT. 5. A great many Learned *Jews* generally conſider this *Term* in reſpect of the *Times*. *R. Solomon Jarchi*, upon *Eccl.* 3. 1. ſays, *The time to be born is nine Months, and the hour of Death is uncertain.* For the underſtanding of this, we muſt take notice, That our Life is limited to ſeveral *Times*. In the beginning of the world Men liv'd

700,

700, 800, or 900 years, conſiſting of 12 Months, as *Joſephus*, *Lib.* 1. *Antiq. Lactan. Div. Inſtit.* 2. and *Auguſtine*, *de civ. Dei l.* 15. affirm. Afterwards God reduc'd this Life to 120 years, Gen. chap. 6. 3 *And the Lord ſaid, my Spirit ſhall not alway ſtrive with Man, for that he alſo is Fleſh: Yet his days ſhall be an hundred and twenty years.* I remember there are other expoſitions of this place, but (as two great Doctors obſerve) they are foreign from the Text. God ſhorten'd Man's Life for his Sins, judging it neceſſary to do ſo, that he might awaken his Conſcience, by the Conſideration of his ſhort Life, and that he might not have ſo many occaſions to Sin. As for *Sem's* living 500 years after the Deluge, *Arphaxad*, *Salem* and *Heber* above 400, and *Abraham* about 200, *R. Iſaac Abravanel* makes this Anſwer: It is not uſual to leap from one Extream to another without obſerving a *Medium*; ſo we muſt ſuppoſe that God would diminiſh Man's Life by degrees, and bring it within the Compaſs of 120 years, though ſcarce any (by reaſon of their Careleſsneſs in eating) except *Moſes*, arriv'd to that Age: For which Reaſon the *Talmudiſts* ſay, That *Moſes* is meant by the words, *For that he alſo is Fleſh*, becauſe the *Hebrew* numbers משה. 345. make up *Moſes*. Laſtly, God ſhorten'd the

Life

Life of Men in *David*'s time, upon which Account the wise Men in *Gemara Yebamoth* say, that in his time the Years were shorter. For thus it is written, *Psal.* 90. 10. *The days of our Years are Threescore Years and Ten*, &c. Tho' the Inscription of this Psalm ascribes it to *Moses*, yet they will have him to be another Prophet, not the Law-giver, or that *David* indicted it in *Moses*'s Name. But for all this, *Moses* may be the Author, for as much as he, by his prophetick Spirit, foretold how short Man's life should be.

Nevertheless, Experience demonstrates, that Man's life is more contracted, and those Persons who attribute this Alteration to the Substance of our Food, the Position of the Heavens, *&c.* are mistaken; because, as I told you before, it was by a Divine Dispensation; and this Reason *Chrysostome Hom.* 2. *in Gen. Philo de Gigant. & Lactant.* l. 2. c. 5. allow of. What *Pliny* relates of *Agarthonius*, *Epimenides*, *Pictoreus* and others, is not repugnant to our Assertion, because he tells us, the Year of the *Arcadians* was but three Months. No doubt but some People, computing after this manner, have told us such strange Stories of old Men. *Valer. Taren.* B. 6. makes mention of an old Man, who at an hundred Years of Age, chang'd his Teeth, Skin, Hairs and Nails, and after that look'd very

young, and liv'd as long again. A *Frenchman* nam'd *John Eſtampis*, alias *Joannes de Temporibus*, is reported by *Paulus Æm. de rebus Franc.* l. 5. to have liv'd 300 Years. *Cardan* relates the ſame of a *Turk*, and likewiſe of an *Indian* that liv'd 340 Years. Though Nature has now and then her Monſters and Exceſſes, yet we muſt not eaſily give credit to theſe things, when they are chiefly founded upon humane Authority. I do not believe that the *Seres* liv'd 200 Years, as *Strabo* reports, or that the *Æthiopians* live as long again as we do, as *Solinus* imagines. There is no doubt but ſome Countries are more healthful than others; yet for all this difference of Climates, which make our Life longer or ſhorter, few People now-a-days exceed the Age of 120 Years *Beroſus* extends it to 110, *Solon* to 84, and *David* to 70. and this is agreeable to what *Trebellius* ſays, That the Mathematicians averr, that an Age cannot be extended beyond 120 Years. From all which we may conclude, that the *Term* of Life is to be underſtood according to the *Ages*, in which there are more or fewer Years.

SECT. 6. Theſe are the general Sentiments of the *Hebrews* concerning the *Term* of Life, and theſe three Opinions in my judgment may be eaſily reconcil'd; for there

there is no queſtion but the heavenly *Influences* which are deriv'd upon Infants contribute much to their *Conſtitutions*, which vary in ſeveral *Ages*. Upon this Account the Learned *Aben Ezra* aſcribes the length of Life ſometimes to the Temper, ſometimes to the Planets, becauſe both Cauſes hold good. And *R. Mehiri in lib. Mehir. Tehilot*, ſays, There are two Cauſes of Man's life, (one in reſpect of Time, (which proceeds from the *Spheres*) and the other is natural Heat) which changes in ſeveral *Ages*.

After all, the *Jews* do not believe that this *Term* is preciſely and unalterably determin'd before-hand by Divine Providence, for theſe following Reaſons.

1. Becauſe God promiſes long Life upon the Obſervation of ſome of his Commandments, as *Exod.* 20. 12. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long upon the Land*, Deut. 4. 40. and 32. 47. Now if our days were decreed by God from all Eternity, this Promiſe would be vain, and no Body could exceed them, much leſs can God deceive us. Therefore it is in the Power of Man to make his Life long or ſhort, as I ſhall ſhew hereafter.

2. We find ſeveral Perſons earneſtly deſiring God to ſpare their Lives. So *Hezekiah*, 2 Kings 20. 2, 3. *Then he turn'd his Face to the Wall, and prayed unto the Lord,*

ſaying, I beſeech thee, O Lord, remember now how I have walked before thee in Truth, and with a perfect Heart. And *David*, Pſ. 61. *Cain*, being afraid of Death, ſays, *Gen.* 14. 14. *Every one that findeth me ſhall ſlay me.* There are others that have deſir'd to die, as *Elias*, 1 Kings 19. 4. *It is enough now, O Lord, take away my Life for I am not better than my Fathers.* And *Jonah*, Chap. 4. 8. *He fainted and wiſh'd in himſelf to die, and ſaid it is better for me to die than to live.* Now if the *Term* of Life was abſolutely predeſtinated, the Prayers of *Hezekiah*, *Cain* and *David* were vain, and thoſe of *Elias* and *Jonah* ſuperfluous. Hence the *Talmudiſts* in *Guemara Berachot*, ſay, That if any one comes into a City, and finds it in an uproar, he may lift up his Voice, and pray to God that he would avert that Evil from his Family: Or, if any one ſhould deſire, after his Wife is with Child, that it may be a *Male*, certainly ſuch Petitions are frivolous, becauſe when a thing is done it cannot be alter'd. This we may apply to our preſent purpoſe; for if all things were decreed from Eternity, it is abſurd to be ſollicitous or careful about any thing.

3. The truth of this Argument is mightily confirm'd by the words which God ſpake to *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 3. 11, 12, 13, 14. From whence it is evident, that *Solomon* might

might ask for Life as a contingent thing, and when God conferr'd on him Wiſdom, Riches and Honour, he promis'd him Life too, not abſolutely but conditionally, *If thou wilt walk in my ways*, &c.

4. If the *Term* of Life is unalterably ſettled, no Man can prevent Death: And yet we find God exhorting Man to beware of Dangers, and the Occaſions of Misfortunes, *Deut.* 20. 5, 6, 7. and in another place, Chap. 22. 8. *When thou buildeſt a new Houſe, then thou ſhalt make a Battlement for thy Roof, that thou bring not Blood upon thine Houſe, if any Man fall from thence:* Therefore it follows that the *Term* of Life is not fixed by an abſolute Predeſtination.

5. *David* himſelf ſays, 1 *Sam.* 27. 10. *As the Lord liveth, the Lord ſhall ſmite him, or his day ſhall come to die, or he ſhall deſcend into Battel and periſh.* If by thoſe words, *or his day ſhall come to die*, he underſtood the Day that was decreed by God, it was ſuperfluous to mention the three kinds of Death: For which ſoever had happen'd it would have been appointed before-hand. And if ſo, it is plain thoſe words were falſe; for *Saul* might have been ſmitten by the Lord, as well as ſlain in the Battel.

6. There is not one place in the Old Teſtament, which affirms this Predeſtination; but we may only collect from the fore-

cited Paſſages, that there is a *Term* of Life, which (as I have explain'd it) depends upon the *Times*, the *Heavens*, and the *Conſtitution*. So *Job* ſays, Chap. 14. 5. *Thou haſt appointed his bounds that he cannot paſs*; by which he means, that all Men muſt die. And *David*, Pſ. 89. 49. *What man is he that liveth, and ſhall not ſee death?* And in another Place 1 *Chron.* 29. 15. *Our days on Earth are as a ſhadow, and there is none abiding.* As for *Job*'s ſaying, Chap. 14. 5. *The Number of his Months are with thee*; he means nothing elſe but God's Pre-ſcience, becauſe God knew and fore-ſaw all things from Eternity.

BOOK II.

Whether the Term *of Life is alterable or unalterable?*

SECT. 1. HAVING in the former Book prov'd, that there is a *Term* to every Man's Life; I ſhall in the next place enquire, whether this *Term* is ſo fix'd, that it is impoſſible to exceed or prevent it, or on the contrary, whether it is mutable?

All the *Jews* unanimouſly conſent, that this *Term* is alterable, though it depend upon the Planets, the Conſtitution, or the Variety of *Times*. Hereupon, *R. Bahye* ſays, that there is a more Eminent Power, above that of the Stars, which orders things by Reward and Puniſhment. The ſame is confirm'd by *Aben Ezra*, upon *Exod.* Ch. 23. Where (aſſigning the dependance of Life upon the *Temper* of the Body) he ſays, that the Natural Heat and Moiſture of every one that ſerves God) is augmented, and then a Man exceeds the *Term* of Life. Therefore according to this Opinion, the *Term* of Life is alterable.

This is the Reaſon that Men take ſuch Care to preſerve their Health, and when it is impair'd, to recover it. This makes them ſo often change the Air. This makes them drink thoſe medicinal Potions, that are ſo nauſeous. In a word, this firſt makes Men ſtudy, and then Practiſe Phyſick. And indeed, as it is very ridiculous to aſpire to that Preferment, which by no Pains or Induſtry can be procur'd; ſo I think it exceeding ſimple to be careful about the Preſervation of our Life, when the *Term* is *immutable*, and it cannot be prolong'd. Nay, it would be to no purpoſe, for the Earth to bring forth Plants, and Herbs (by the Bounty of God) for no other Deſign than the uſe of Phyſick.

But that we may eſtabliſh this Opinion better, let us conſult the 3d *Chap.* of *Eccl.* and the 1ſt. *Verſe*. In which place *Solomon* affirms, That the *Term of Life* is *alterable*. *There is a time to be born, and a time to die*. Here we ſee, that our Birth and Death are paralleli'd, foraſmuch as they have both a certain time. Now if by the hour of Death, that *Term of Life* is underſtood, which is unalterably decreed by God; then the ſame may be ſaid of the hour of our Nativity. But if this is granted, the very Name of Nature is deſtroy'd; for by this means we are oblig'd to acknowledge, that God decreed the Birth

Birth of *Abraham*, his long Life, his Marriage which *Sarah*, her Conception and Delivery of a Son, which is abſurd; when common Experience makes it appear, that theſe things depend upon Free-will. If any one enquires, how we muſt underſtand, that there is ſome time of Life appointed? Rabbi *Solomon* anſwers, The time of our Formation is compleated in nine Months, but that of Death alters, according to the Diverſity of the *Age*. And as I ſaid before, this is commonly the ſpace of 70 years. This being premiſed, I conclude that the ſpace of 70 years, or rather the *Term of Life* is uncertain and mutable, when the ſpace of nine Months, or the time of Pregnancy, is ſo too. The time of our Birth is doubtleſs uncertain, for though the *Talmudick* Doctors do averr, That the *Fœtus's* of dumb Animals are form'd within a limitted time, yet they do not own the ſame of young Children. They make the time of Parturition threefold, one at the ninth Month, which is common and uſual, and this they will have meant by the word *Conception*, which in the *Hebrew* contains the number 271, for there are ſo many days in nine Months. The ſecond time that a Woman is with Child, is ſeven Months; hence in the *Jeruſalem Targum* upon theſe words, Gen. 3. 16. *I will greatly multiply thy*

thy Sorrow, and thy Conception, &c. the Commentators ſay, That the word *in multiplying*, according to the numerical Letters of the *Hebrew*, makes up 212 days, which are equivalent to ſeven Months; agreeably to this, the Philoſophers *Empedocles*, *Plotinus*, and *Macrobius*, ſay, That a Child can't live, that is born before the ſeventh Month. Some of the *Rabbins* are of an Opinion, that every one of the ſeven Planets performs an Office in the Production of Children.

The third time of Parturition is extended to the 12th. Month. *Agellius B. 3. chap. 16.* reports, that a Woman was brought to Bed at *Rome*, the 11th. Month after her Husband's Deceaſe. The Emperor *Adrian*, (by the Conſent of Phyſicians and Philoſophers) maintains that this thing is poſſible. *Bernard* mentions a Woman (which is ſcarce credible) that was 16 Months with Child. Thus we ſee, that it is ordinary for Women to be with Child nine Months, yet extraordinarily they may be Deliver'd before, or after that time; ſo the ordinary *Term* of Man's Life is 70 years, yet very few live ſo long. Therefore the *Term* of our Life is not ſo preciſely Fix'd, but it may be chang'd.

SECT. 2. Man's Life may be ſhortne'd ſeveral ways, *viz. by Divine Providence*,

dence, Chance, or Nature. Theſe three Cauſes I put inſtead of the three fatal Siſters, to whom the Heathens aſcrib'd the Boundaries of Life. Thus a Man's Life is ſhortn'd by Providence, for Example, when a Man is *cut off* from the People, which Puniſhment the Scripture makes mention of; and by which the *Cabbaliſts*, *Aramban*, and *Iſaac Abravanel* affirm, a Man's Life is taken away in the midſt of his days, and the Soul after its Separation from the Body, is depriv'd of the ſight of God.

Hence it is manifeſt, that our Life may be ſhortn'd by Sin, and prolong'd by Vertue. But I ſhall Illuſtrate this Argument by ſome Examples. The *Rabbins* ſay, That *Abraham* liv'd 175 years, which are five leſs than his Son *Iſaac*, becauſe he ſhould not ſee the Impiety of his Kinſman *Eſau*. *Rachel* alſo did not live out her days. *For that which proceeds out of a righteous Man's mouth, is the ſame as if it came out of an Angels.* *Jacob*, not knowing that ſhe had ſtolen her Fathers Idols, curs'd her, ſaying, *With whom ſoever thou findeſt thy Gods, let him not live*, Gen. 31. 32. So they ſay, though *Joſeph* liv'd 110 years, yet he died before all his Brethren, becauſe he had exercis'd a great deal of Severity towards them; *Abijah* is ſaid to be ſlain by the Lord for the Sin, by which he polluted himſelf,

himſelf, ſaying, *Ye be a great multitude, and there are with you Golden Calves, which Jeroboam made you for Gods.* 2 Chron. 13. 8. With this agrees what *Iſaiah* ſays, Chap. 6. 5. *Woe is me for I am undone, becauſe I am a Man of unclean Lips*, and an Angel came, and touched his Lips (with which he had offended) with *a Coal.*

There are more clear Examples beſide theſe, (in *Saul* and his Sons) which the Scripture expreſſes after this manner. 1 Chron. 10. 13, 14. *So Saul died for his Tranſgreſſion which he committed againſt the Lord, even againſt the word of the Lord, which he kept not.* God ſmote *Nabal* with a ſudden Death, 1 Sam. 25. 38. *And it came to paſs about ten days after, that the Lord ſmote Nabal that he died.* Here the *Jewiſh* Doctors note that thoſe were the ten days which are between the beginning of the Year, and the Day of Expiation; which we, call penitential days, becauſe every one ought then to Examine his Life, and conſider what he has ſaid, or done amiſs. *Jeremiah* foretold the Death of *Hananiah* the falſe Prophet, Chap. 28. 16. *This year ſhalt thou die, becauſe thou haſt taught Rebellion againſt the Lord.* But what ſhall we ſay of that vaſt multitude, which periſh'd in the Deluge? of thoſe that were conſum'd in *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*? of *Korah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, and their wicked Accomplices whom

whom the Earth ſwallow'd up alive? Of that grievous Plague which ſwept away ſo many *Iſraelites* in *David*'s time? Is it not manifeſt enough, that their Lives were ſhorten'd by *Divine Providence*? Pertinent to this are the words of *David*, Pſal. 37. 22. *Such as be bleſſed of him, ſhall inherit the Earth: And they that be curſed of him ſhall be cut off*; and of *Jeremiah*, Chap. 17. 11. *He that getteth Riches and not by Right, ſhall leave them in the midſt of his days*, which R. *Kimchi* expounding ſays, He ſhall die before his time. *Job* ſays, Chap. 36. 12. *If they obey not they ſhall periſh by the Sword.* And *Solomon* Eccl. 8. 13. *It ſhall not be well with the wicked, neither ſhall he prolong his days*, Chap. 7. 17. *Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou fooliſh, Why ſhouldſt thou die before thy time?* Upon which places the *Chaldee* Paraphraſt ſays, They ſhall ſhorten their days, becauſe they ſhall die before their time comes to die. Becauſe God us'd to puniſh Sinners with untimely Death, therefore *David* prays, Pſal. 102. 24. That God would not *take him away in the midſt of his days.* The *Cabbaliſts* upon that place of the *Proverbs*, Chap. 13. 23. *There is that is deſtroyed for want of Judgment*, ſay, That it is certain, that Men often die before their time. Hither may be referr'd thoſe Perſons that are puniſh'd for their Crimes,

as

as *Joab*, *Shimei* and many more. Concerning theſe *Solomon* obſerves, Prov. 19. 16. *He that deſpiſeth his ways ſhall die*, upon which words the Learned *Aben Ezra* comments, *Before his time, becauſe the Council ſhall put him to Death.*

SECT. 3. There is another way likewiſe, by which Life may be ſhorten'd, and that is by *Chance* or *Fortune*. For this Reaſon *R. Judah Levita*, upon thoſe wards of *Samuel*, *Or he ſhall deſcend into the Battel and periſh*, &c. ſays, That is an accidental Death. And R. *Joſeph Albo* affirms, that it ſignifies a Death, that happens by Chance, and without any antecedent Offence, and merely by the Power of a Celeſtial *Sign*. But that I may explain this thing more clearly, I ſhall ſhew, what the *Jews* meant by *Chance and Fortune*.

And in the firſt place, they uſually diſtinguiſh between *Fortune and Chance*. The latter of which they attribute to inanimate and inſenſible Creatures. For inſtance, if Tyles fall from a Houſe, when the Wind blows and kill a Man. Here we have two things, 1. A natural Cauſe; for it is natural for the Wind to blow. 2. That which may be properly call'd *Chance*, for it is caſual indeed that a Tyle ſhould drop off, and kill any one.

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Sometimes they uſe it more ſtrictly, and aſcribe it to ſenſible, and animate Creatures, that Act by Inſtinct.

Fortune they call *Hizdaimen*, and will have it to belong only to Men, or rational Creatures. Though theſe two things do differ, yet the difference is ſo ſmall, that they are both very often comprehended in the ſame Definition; for according to ſome of the *Rabbins*, *Chance* and *Fortune* are defin'd after this manner, they are ſuch things as come by accident, not naturally, or by Order and Deſign. For Example, if a Man by digging a Pit ſhould find a Treaſure. That *Claudius* endeavouring to conceal himſelf, ſhould be diſcover'd by a Soldier, and created Emperour. That *Caligula* (as *Suetonius* teſtifies) walking out after Supper, ſhould be unexpectedly ſlain by the way. Theſe and ſuch like things the *Hebrews* call *Chance* and *Fortune*, from whence they that have good or bad Fortune, are call'd fortunate or unfortunate.

Hereupon, R. *Judah Levita*, R. *Iſaac Arama*, and R. *Solomon Jebet* have divided all our Actions into four *Claſſes*, *viz.* Divine, natural, caſual and voluntary. For all things that come to paſs in the World, proceed either from God's Providence, Nature, Chance, or Man's Free-will. This is certainly a very accurate, and elegant Diſtinction. The *Hebrews* likewiſe affirm,

That

That God often deſerts Men for their Sins and Iniquities, and then they are expos'd to *Chance and Fortune*; this they prove out of *Levit. chap.* 26 27,28. i. e. (as *Abravanel* and all others expound it) *If ye walk not conſtantly with me, and uprightly, then will I leave you* (that were before guarded by my Providence) *ſubject to the miſ-chances and accidents of the World.*

Theſe things happen to thoſe whom God forſakes, as it is written, Deut 31. 18. *I will ſurely hide my face in that day*, that is, my Providence and my Favour: Thereupon the *Jews* are wont to ſay, That any Vice or Sin (though not Mortal) is enough to make a Man obnoxious to *Chance*, which thing is confirm'd by them out of the Scriptures. For *Moſes* advertiſing the *Iſraelites*, leaſt they ſhould be hurt by the deſtroying Angel, ſpeaks thus. Exod. 12. 22. *None of you ſhall go out of the door of his houſe until the morning.* And in another place. Deut. 20. 5. *What man is there that hath built a new houſe, and hath not Dedicated it? Let him go and return to his houſe, leſt he die in the battel.* Alſo, 22. 8. *Thou ſhalt make a Battlement for thy Roof, that thou bring not Blood upon thy houſe.* From which places it appears, that it is in Man's power to avoid Danger, or run into it; for as a King does not regard the Promotion, or Advancement of a perſon that

is

is not his Subject: So neither has God a particular Care of thoſe who neglect the obedience of his Laws, but reſigns them to the Scorn and Contempt of *Fortune.* The ſame alſo is maintain'd by R. *Levi Ben Gerſon* (in his *Milhamot à ſem B.4. c.2.*) in theſe words, *It is not reaſonable, that we ſhould allow ſuch a Providence, that makes it impoſſible that wicked Men ſhould be capable of receiving that good which the Stars have ordain'd for them.* I only affirm, *That ſuch People are liable to thoſe mis-fortunes which the heavenly Signs incline them to, and that God does not protect them from thoſe Evils that the Planets have deſign'd.* For this Cauſe the *Talmudiſts* ſay, A Man ſhould never run into Danger, and then deſire a Miracle for his relief; becauſe he may be diſappointed of that.

But here we muſt take notice, That many things may ſeem to fall out by Chance and Fortune, which nevertheleſs are order'd by the ſpecial Care and Direction of *Providence.* And therefore the *Rabbins* (commenting upon that Text, in Exod. 21. 13. *If a Man lie not in wait, but God deliver him into his hand*) ſay, That God takes Opportunities, (as if it were by Chance) to execute his Judgments; which they illuſtrate by this Example. Once upon a time there were two Murderers, one had kill'd a Man by Chance, and the o-

ther deſignedly, but no body yet knew when they did it. Now what does God do in this Caſe? Does he ſuffer theſe Crimes to go unpuniſh'd? No; but behold! God orders it ſo, that both of them ſhould come into the ſame *Inn*, where he, that ſlew the Man accidentally, climbed up a Ladder, and tumbling down kill'd the other, but he that fell down (recovering himſelf) flew to a place of Refuge, that he might be ſecur'd from Proſecution, and ſo both of them were puniſh'd. There is another way by which *Chance* and *Providence* may concurr, as in the Death of King *Ahab*; for though it was foretold by the Prophet, yet the Scripture records, he was undeſignedly ſlain by an Archer. We conclude therefore, that Mens Lives may be ſometimes ſhorten'd by *Chance*, or unexpected Events. Souldiers are in the greateſt Danger of theſe; for as *Solomon* obſerves, *The Battel is not always to the ſtrong*, Eccl. 9. 11. ſo R. *Bahye* notes upon Deut. 20. 5. *Leſt he die in the Battel, i. e.* ſays he, *before his time: From whence it appears that he who dies in War, dies before his time.*

SECT. 4. A Man's Life alſo may be ſhorten'd by natural means. As 1ſt. By an ill Habit of Body, which often proceeds from the Parents; for *Hippocrates* ſays,

ſays, a Phlegmatick Father, begets a Phlegmatick Son, and a Colerick Father, a Colerick Son. 2d. By unwholeſome Air. 3d. By the diſorders of our Affections, and a debauch'd way of Living. Hence *Philo* the *Jew*, (In his Book of the Creation of the World:) ſays, That ſeveral ſorts of Meat are apt to hurt and oppreſs the Stomach; *Chryſoſt.* (*in contra lux. & crap. Orat*) *againſt Luxury and Drunkenneſs*, ſays, as a Ship that is over Laden will ſink, ſo a Man, that eats too much, haſtens his Death. The Phyſicians too are of Opinion that much Meat, and of ſeveral ſorts are prejudicial to the Body, and ſhorten Life; as it is reported, that *Vitellius* and *Julian* eat Variety of Victuals often in a day. Laſtly, A great many Infirmities, which are the Cauſe of a ſhort Life, proceed from an ill Digeſtion; theſe Infirmities the *Talmudiſts* ſay are 903, which are noted in thoſe words of *David*. Pſal. 68. 20. *The Iſſues of death.* We offend againſt the Rules of Health, by the quantity and quality of our Food, and in the time and manner of Eating. Hence *David* ſays, Pſal. 34. 21. *Evil ſhall ſlay the wicked*; i. e. Such Perſons do as good as kill themſelves; and hither may be refer'd all that do ſo, as *Achitophel* and others. All theſe Cauſes of a ſhort Life, are beſt remark'd by *Maimonides*, in *Yada hazaka*, for in that Book where he had preſcrib'd

moſt uſeful Receipts for the Preſervation of Health; he adds this, *Whoſoever obſerves theſe Rules which are laid down by me, I dare avouch ſhall never be ſick all his Life, or want a Phyſician, but die of mere old Age; except his Body was infirm from his Birth; or a Peſtilence, or a Famine infeſt that part of the Country where he lives.* Here we may diſcern by what Cauſes *Maimonides* declares our Life may be ſhorten'd, *viz.* by an ill Complexion, by a looſe Courſe of Living, by Divine Providence, by Plague or Famine. I proceed now to ſhew that our Life may be prolong'd.

SECT. 5. God, in ſeveral places, Promiſes long Life to good Men, and thoſe who obey his Laws, as Exod. 20. 12. *Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy days may be long in the Land.* Likewiſe in Deut. 17. 20. and 22. 7. and in Pſal. 91. 16. *With long Life will I ſatisfie him.* Prov. 28. 16. *He that hateth Covetouſneſs ſhall prolong his days.* 9. 11. *for by me thy days ſhall be multiplied, and the years of thy Life ſhall be increaſed.* And in many other places this Promiſe is expreſly given by God, to Holy and Religious Men. But for all this there is a great Diſpute (among our Doctors) about the quality, and form of this Promiſe. R. *Moſes Gerund.* thinks 'tis extended to old Age, *i.e.* 70, or 80 years; for which

which Reaſon upon thoſe words, *Exod. chap.* 23. 26. He ſays the meaning is, He ſhall not die in Battel, or by Peſtilence, or by Change of Air, but by old Age. R. *David Kimchi* is of the ſame Opinion, and declares it upon that Text in 2 Sam. 7. 12. *When thy days be fulfill'd, and thou ſhalt ſleep with thy Fathers, i. e.* when thou art old, and haſt liv'd the longeſt time, which is uſually 70 years. Therefore, whenever that Expreſſion of *Augmentation* occurs in Scripture, we muſt underſtand ſome Infirmity, or ill Temper, from which a Man is deliver'd, as in thoſe Places, *Prov.* 9. 11. and 10. 27. For if a Man keeps the Commandments of God, though he ſhould be very ſick and weak, yet God can recover him and prolong his days, as may appear from the forecited Texts. And if God doth grant it, he is Happy, and arrives to the Term of 70 or 80 years. Hence, R. *Joel Ben Sueb* (in *lib. Norah Thehilot.*) upon thoſe words of *David*, *Pſal.* 61. 6. ſays, That *David* deſires no more than the ordinary time of Life; but R. *Solomon* is more exact, and ſays *David* means by Generations 70 years, for twice 35 years makes up two Generations, or 70 years. This was the Opinion of R. *Aquiba*, (before theſe two) that by Vertue and good Actions Life was increaſed; ſo *Hezekiah* liv'd 15 years longer upon the Account of his Repentance,

for he was but 29 years old then, and had reign'd but 14 years.

Hereupon the *Rabbins* ſay, That God's *Augmentation* is more than the Principal, for all thoſe computed together, make up but 58 years; ſo that he did not live to the ordinary Term of 70 years. This indeed is a great Puniſhment, but 'tis ſuch an one, by which it may appear, that thoſe Perſons may have the Grant of a longer Life, who deſerve it. To theſe things belong that Saying of ſome of the Ancients, *That God has a particular regard for thoſe who live juſtly and righteouſly for the ſake of their good Deeds, and therefore their Life is proportionable, i. e. he daily encreaſes their Life.* Hence (upon thoſe words of *Moſes*, Deut. 31. 2.) They ſay, *Now my days are fulfill'd, this day I was born, and this day I ſhall die*; for *Moſes* was born, and dy'd, upon the ſeventh day of the Month *Adar*. So likewiſe the 365 years of *Enoch*, which he liv'd upon Earth, were proportion'd to the 365 days of a Solar year; whoſe Age being (as I may ſay) proportion'd, he was tranſlated into Heaven. After this manner God uſually conſummates, and compleats the days of the Juſt. Therefore *David* ſays, Pſal. 37. 18. *The Lord knoweth the days of the upright*; as if he took a particular Account of every day. According to theſe Men, the Reward of a long

long Life is nothing elſe, but the Completion of 70 or 80 Years, which ſome of them ſay no Body can exceed.

But there are other Men who diſſent from theſe: For *R. Niſſim*, *R. Joſeph Albo*, *Iſaac Abravanel*, and others, believe that all the Promiſes of the *Moſaick* Law are Supernatural, and for that Reaſon maintain, that the Promiſe of long Life is not limited within the Compaſs of 70 or 80 Years; and that a Man may live longer. Hence a certain *Rabbi* ſays, *If a Man deſerves it, his two Generations ſhall be augmented, if not, they ſhall be diminiſh'd.* This opinion is moſt in vogue among the celebrated Authors.

Hereupon, thoſe Doctors who approve of the Sentiments of the Aſtrologers, ſay, that where-ever the word *Augmentation* occurs in the Scripture, it is meant beyond the *End* determin'd by the Planets. They who think the *Term* of Life depends upon the Conſtitution, ſay, that God by a certain Divine Power encreaſes the Radical Moiſture. Hence *Aben Ezra* remarks, that our days are not appointed afore, but are natural, and that Nature is wonderfully enlarg'd by good Works. The ſame thing is taken notice of by *R. Mehir in lib. Urim & Vetumim.* for this Reaſon, ſays he, the Receſſion of the Sun upon the Dial, was given by God as a Token to *Hezekiah* of

the Continuance of his Life, becauſe the Sun is the Fountain of all natural Heat; upon this Account, the Sun receeding and retracting his Rays together with his natural Heat; he that through Age had impair'd this, might have it reſtor'd, and as it were grow young again. According to this Opinion (which I think the beſt) the prolongation of Life which God promiſed, does exceed any *Term*, whether *Complexional*, *Planetary*, *or Secular*.

SECT. 6. In the next Place let us ſee, how Vertue and Piety are the means to promote the Radical Moiſture in Men. As the Happineſs of the Soul conſiſts in Goodneſs, or in the Knowledge of Vertue, and what is moſt commendable: In like manner, a Man's life is increaſed and renew'd by good Actions and Meditation on God's Law. Now that Life is enlarg'd by Piety may be evinc'd by the words of *Solomon*, Prov. 10. 27. Here the *Talmudiſts* ſay, this is evident from Experience *The fear of the Lord prolongeth days*: He ſays this in reſpect of the firſt Temple, which laſted not above 410 Years, and under which there were not above 13 Prieſts: *And the years of the wicked ſhall be ſhorten'd.* He ſpeaks this in reference to the ſecond Temple, which continued 420, and there were above 300 Prieſts under that; by this number,

ber, they mean a great many. And they further add, that they liv'd longer under the firſt Temple, than they did under the ſecond, becauſe they were more *holy*.

Furthermore, our Doctors aſſert, that there are 113 Bones and Nerves in a Man, to which the 113 Precepts of the Law correſpond. Hence the *Cabbaliſts* ſay, that Men (by Religion and keeping God's Commandments) not only purifie their Body, ſo that of Terreſtrial and Groſs, it becomes Celeſtial and Spiritual, but even corroborate and augment the natural Heat ſo much, that it ſometimes becomes immortal, as *Enoch*'s and *Elias*'s did. And this is not contrary to Reaſon: For, if according to *Galen*, good Diet preſerves Health, and conſequently prolongs Life; may we not allow the ſame Efficacy, nay greater, to the wiſe Government of the Soul? Now the Body receives Life from the Union of the Soul; therefore if this be manag'd according to the Rules of true Holineſs, (which are not preſcrib'd by *Galen*, or *Hippocrates*, but which we learn from Heaven) no Man can deny, but it is moſt reaſonable to expect long Life, from a perſeverance in that. I remember that I have read of a certain *Rabbi*, that wonder'd that Men ſhould live ſo long in *Babylon*, when 'tis ſituated ſo low, (which Places *Avicenna* takes notice are very unhealthy)

healthy) but, when he was inform'd *that they often frequented the Synagogues*, he was very well ſatisfied. The like I met with in *Gucmera de Tahanit*, c. 4. where ſome People asking how they might prolong their lives, the wiſe Men anſwer'd, that it might be done partly by a natural Cauſe, and partly by a moral one, *viz. The fear of the Lord.* I have read alſo of a Merchant, (who liv'd in the Iſland of *Cyprus*) that order'd it to be proclaim'd, that he had abundance of ſweet Spices to ſell that were excellent to preſerve Life, and when a great many People came to purchaſe them, he pull'd out a Pſalter out of his Bag, and ſhew'd 'em the 34th Pſalm, where *David* ſays, *v.* 13, 14. *What man is he that deſireth life, and loveth many days, that he may ſee good? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from ſpeaking guile*; by which he would intimate that Piety, was the beſt Aromatick to procure long Life. Beſides, the Meditation upon God's word is the means to prolong Life, and reſtore the natural Heat. This is ſtrongly confirm'd by *Solomon's* Exhortation: For that moſt wiſe King (where he ſpeaks about the Law) ſays, *Length of Days is in her Right-hand, and in her Left-hand Riches and Honour*, Prov. 3. 16. Alſo *Chap.* 9. 11. *By me thy days ſhall be multiplied*; and in another place, *Chap.* 3. 8. *It ſhall be health to my Navel, and marrow*

to

to my Bones. The Reaſon is, becauſe the Scripture ſaith, *Man ſhall not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord*, Deut. 8 3. From hence it appears that Men are nouriſh'd by Spiritual, as well as Corporal Food. And this I believe is the Reaſon why *Solomon* compares the Law of God to the Tree of Life, *Prov.* 3. 18. becauſe as the Tree of Life (which was in Paradiſe) had ſuch a Vertue, that whoever taſted the Fruit of it, grew young and vigorous again. So the Law of God (which is like the Tree of Life) has the ſame effect. In like manner, if *Adam* had not ſinn'd, (tho' his Body was compounded of a mixture of the four Elements) he might have liv'd a great many Years longer, and at laſt his Soul, together with his Body, might have been tranſlated into Heaven, as it happen'd to *Enoch*, and *Elias*, and all others would have enjoyed the like Privilege who had liv'd in perfect Obedience to the Law.

Hence the *Rabbins* believe, that when the Law was given to *Moſes*, God plac'd the *Iſraelites* in the ſame State that *Adam* was in before the *Fall*. But that happy Condition laſted not long, by reaſon of their abominable Idolatry in worſhipping the *Calf*. Therefore *David* ſays, *Pſ.* 82. 7, 8. *I have ſaid ye are Gods; and all of you are Children of the moſt high: But ye ſhall die like Men*, &c. What

What I have mention'd already does notably illuſtrate and confirm that ſingular Example (which is recorded in *Guemera Jebamot*, c. 12. of a certain Family in *Jeruſalem*, out of which, whoſoever was born ſeldom liv'd above Eighteen years; which thing being related to *R Johanan Ben Zachay*, and being ask'd what was the reaſon of it, he bid them enquire, if they were not of *Eli's* Poſterity, whom God had threaten'd, ſaying, 1 *Sam.* 2. 33. *All the increaſe of thine Houſe ſhall die in the flower of their Age.* And it was diſcover'd that they were deriv'd from him. Upon which, he admoniſh'd them, that if they deſir'd God would grant them longer Lives, they ſhould very diligently meditate upon his Law. This wiſe Man's advice had its effect and experience ſhew'd it. And out of gratitude the Family would ever after be call'd by his Name. Our *Rabbins* likewiſe report, that the Sabbath-day on which *David* died, he was very intent in meditating on God's Law; which when the Angel *Samuel* (who is the common Executioner of Death) perceiv'd, he could not execute his Office. Wherefore he contriv'd this Stratagem, that a high Wind ſhould vehemently ſhake the Trees that grew in *David's* Court, that might occaſion his coming abroad, which it did; but as he was going down ſome ſteps, he miſs'd one of them, and

and fell down; upon which the King (being in a Conſternation) did not think upon God's Law, ſo his Meditation ceaſing, his Life ceas'd alſo.

The *Rabbins* in this place are of opinion, that *David* obtain'd ſuch Favour from God by his Sanctity, and his devout Hymns, that Death could have had no Power over him, if he had not committed Adultery, and Murder. *Save only in the Matter of Uriah*, ſays the Scripture, 1 *Kings* 15. 5. This is enough to ſhew that our Life may be prolong'd by obſerving God's Laws, and meditating thereon; ſo that if any one would perfectly and conſtantly obſerve the Law, it is probable that (like *Elias*) he would never die. For I believe this may be miraculouſly done two ways: Firſt, by preſerving the Radical Moiſture in its due State. Secondly, by preſerving the Vertue of our Food. As to the Firſt, it is confirmed by the Example of *Moſes*, who liv'd forty Days in Mount *Sinai*, without Meat or Drink; then the Divine Law (which was inſtead of Food) preſerv'd the Radical Moiſture in its due Vigour and Strength. The other is confirm'd by the Example of *Elias*; for the Angel ſaid unto him, *Ariſe and eat becauſe the Journey is too great for thee*, 1 Kings 19. 7, 8. And in the next verſe 'tis added, That *he went in the ſtrength of that meat* 40 *days and* 40 *nights*: For

For the vertue in the Meat was preſerv'd as if he had but juſt eaten it, ſo that he was not ſenſible of any Fatigue all thoſe 40 days and Nights. We muſt not forget the wonderfull Story of *Elias*, and the Woman of *Sarepta*; for we read how the Prophet ſaid unto her, 1 *Kings* 17. 14. *The Barrel of Meal ſhall not waſte, neither ſhall the Cruiſe of Oyl fail.* And ſo it came to paſs, for as much as was taken out one day, was reſtor'd the next: Thus the *Radical Moiſture*, (which is like Oyl) is miraculouſly preſerv'd, in its due quantity and quality, by a conſtant Courſe of Piety. I ſay miraculouſly, becauſe it can't be naturally. And when I propos'd this Queſtion to *Zacuthus* (a very learned and worthy Phyſician among us) he courteouſly anſwer'd (in a particular Treatiſe) that it was above the Power of Nature, and prov'd it by Reaſon, and the Authority of ſeveral Authors. Wherefore we juſtly aſcribe it to the Omnipotent Power of God, and conclude that it can't be effected without a Miracle.

SECT. 7. This is a proper place to treat of the *Jewiſh* Ceremonies about the Sick. As ſoon as any one is taken ill, we immediately ſend for a Phyſician, in order for his Recovery. This we all know is lawfull, for God himſelf uſes means in natural Actions; and which I will ſhew by this Example. Though

Though God was able to deliver *Samuel* out of the hands of *Saul*, nevertheleſs he ſaith, *Take an Heifer with thee, and ſay I am come to Sacrifice to the Lord*, 1 Sam. 16. 2. By which means he might conceal his Deſign of anointing *David* to be King, who, when he was anointed, induſtriouſly endeavour'd to eſcape the hand of *Saul*. So *Gideon* made uſe of Trumpets, as natural means, *Judges* 7. 16. *Eliſha* alſo the Prophet, (when he ſent one of the Sons of the Prophets to anoint *Jehu* King,) commanded him that he ſhould do it privately in an *inner Chamber*, 2 King. 9. 2.

Now if Phyſick is good and lawful, we may doubtleſs ſend for a Phyſician to cure the Sick. There were a great many Eminent Phyſicians formerly among us, as we read in the *Talmud* of *Samuel* (a skilful Phyſician, and Aſtrologer) who Cur'd R. *Jehuda* of the Toothach, which he had been troubl'd with for ſeveral years, and we read in another Place, that he Cur'd the ſame Man's Eyes. There goes a remarkable Story of R. *Iſmael*, and R. *Aquiba*; who (travelling near *Jeruſalem* with a Countreyman in their Company) met a ſick Man, whom they preſently Cur'd with an infallible Medicine. The Countryman ſeeing this, ask'd them who was the Cauſe of that Man's Sickneſs? They anſwer'd, God. Why then (ſays he) are you

ſo

ſo preſumptuous to meddle with another Man's Buſineſs; God (as you confeſs) having made him Sick, and will ye pretend to Cure him? But they (to apply themſelves to his Capacity) ask'd him what Profeſſion he was of? Don't you ſee (ſays the Countryman) by the Inſtrument that I carry in my hand, that I am a Farmer? Who then (ſay they) made your Land? and who is the Cauſe of the Fertility of your Vineyard? God, reply'd he. Why then (ſay they) do you concern your ſelf with another Man's work, and eat thoſe Fruits that God has made? O! (ſays the Farmer) if I do not Plow, and Cultivate, and weed my Ground, I am ſure I ſhall have no Crop. Well then, (ſay they) honeſt Friend, have not you read in the 103 Pſal. v. 15. *That the days of Man are as Graſs*: Now Man is like a Tree; the Dung which is laid to it, to make it thrive, is like the ſweet Spices and medicinal Potions, and the Husbandman repreſents the Phyſician; ſo they pleaſantly convinc'd him of his Error.

From this it appears, That the Ancients approv'd, and made uſe of Phyſick, whenever God afflicted any Perſon with a Diſeaſe. The *Cabbaliſts* are of the ſame mind, for (commenting upon that Place of Deut. 32. 10. *He found him in a deſert Land.*) They ſay a ſick Man is like one that God finds

finds in a Deſert, wherefore a Phyſician is to be conſulted, who may cure him by Purges, or opening a Vein, and then preſcribe a regular Diet which may preſerve his Health. Hither we may referr, what ſeveral great *Rabbi's* have ſaid; that when a Perſon has procur'd a Licence from the Magiſtrate to practiſe Phyſick, he is obliged to cure the Sick, and he may lawfully demand a Fee. But after all, we muſt not rely too much upon the Phyſician, and ſo forget God: For we muſt earneſtly and devoutly call upon him; in which *Aben Ezra* agrees with me; but he ſo far diſſents from my Opinion, that he will not allow of a Phyſician in internal and ſecret Diſtempers, but wholly ſubmit to God. *R. Vidal* has admirably confuted him, and commended the Uſe of Phyſick. But here are two things that deſerve conſideration, one reſpects the Phyſician, and the other the Patient. As to the firſt, a Phyſician ought to be very careful about his Patient's recovery, otherwiſe he may loſe his own Soul. For upon this Account the *Talmudiſts* ſay that the beſt Phyſicians ſometimes go to Hell. For there are ſome that pretend to cure a Diſtemper which they do not underſtand, others do not take notice of the proper time to adminiſter the Phyſick; and there are others that leave all to Chance, and care not whether their

Patient lives or dies. It often happens that a ſick Man loſes his Life while the Phyſicians are diſputing about the Nature of the Diſeaſe. And perhaps, for this reaſon Phyſicians are ſometimes call'd Murderers: May be *Alexander* too was of that mind, when he commanded *Glaucus* the Phyſician to be executed, becauſe he did not recover his Friend *Hephæſtion*. I ſpeak only of bold, ignorant *Quacks*, for the skilful and honeſt Phyſicians are call'd in the Scripture *Heads*.

That Conſideration which ſhould affect the Patient, is, that he muſt not too confidently depend upon the Phyſician, or natural Means, but chiefly put his truſt in God; for this Reaſon is *Aſa* reprehended for placing too much hope in the Phyſicians: For ſo ſays the Text, 2 *Chron.* 16. 12. *In his Diſeaſe he ſought not to the Lord, but to the Phyſicians.* The Prophet does not reprove the King becauſe he ſent for them, but becauſe he expected a Cure only from them, and never regarded God. Thus the *Talmudiſts*, among their Praiſes of the good King *Hezekiah*, reckon this deſerves a place, becauſe he *hid a Book of Phyſick.* Some think the Author of it was *Solomon*, others that it was a Book of Magick, and therefore hid by *Hezekiah*, becauſe ſome People in thoſe Times us'd to conſult it for the Cure of their Diſeaſes, and ſo neglect-

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ed to implore God's Aid and Aſſiſtance. For God is the true Phyſician, and he that putteth his Truſt in him, may expect Eaſe and Comfort in time of Sickneſs: Thus it is ſaid, in *Exod.* ch. 15. 26. *I will put none of thoſe Diſeaſes upon thee, which I have brought upon the* Egyptians; *for I am the Lord that healeth thee.*

SECT. 8. The *Talmudiſts* ſay, there are four things which incline God to alter his Decrees, *viz.* Alms-deeds, fervent Prayer, a Change of the Name, and a Change of Works. And theſe are the four means which the *Jews* make uſe of in a dangerous Diſtemper; ſo they commonly ſecretly relieve thoſe Perſons who are in the greateſt Exigencies: For as Money does, as it were, give life to a poor Man, ſo they hope that God will grant them their Life when they deſire it. For this Reaſon, the *Jews* frequently collect Alms for the Poor that live in the City, or for thoſe that live in the Holy Land, or for thoſe that are in Priſons and Dungeons, or for any other charitable Uſes.

This they believe is meant by thoſe words of *Solomon*, Prov. 10. 2. *Righteouſneſs delivereth from Death*, &c. 12. 28. 21. 21. And it is confirm'd by Experience, for *R. Aquiba*'s Daughter being almoſt ſtung to Death by a Serpent (which the Aſtrolo-

gers had foretold) was recover'd upon the Account of her generous Charity. Hence comes the *Rabbinical* Proverb, *Whoever ſays, I give this Money, that my Children may live, is perfectly juſt.* The meaning of which is, though we owe our Life and Goods, and all that we poſſeſs to God who gave them: Nevertheleſs, whoſoever relieves a poor Man, in expectation of obtaining God's Favour, he ought not to be eſteem'd ſimple, but perfectly juſt: So much for *Alms.*

The next Remedy is *fervent Prayer.* By this means *Hezekiah* prevail'd ſo much with God, that he granted him a longer Life, though he had determin'd his Death. From hence comes that ſaying of the wiſe Men, *Though a Man ſees a ſharp Sword clapp'd to his Throat, yet he muſt not deſpair of God's Mercy.* By which they underſtand, that Prayer has ſuch a Power, that it can reverſe the Sentence of Death, which was pronounc'd by God againſt him. Therefore, when *David* ſays, *Pſ.* 107. 6. *Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he deliver'd them out of their diſtreſſes.* The Pſalmiſt underſtands this of the time of the *Ægyptian* Captivity: For the *Iſraelites* lifting up their minds to Heaven, humbly pray'd that God would releaſe them before the appointed time. This is the chiefeſt Remedy the *Jews* make uſe of when they

they are dangerously sick. And because the Prayers of many, are usually more acceptable, it is appointed that the Sick should be pray'd for in the Synagogues. I have read of *R. Hanina Ben Dossa*, a very pious Man, who us'd to judge of the Life or Death of those Sick Persons that he pray'd for. For, says he, if I pronounce my Prayer smoothly, and easily, it is a sign of its Acceptance, and that the Person will recover; but if it is in the least interrupted, or I hesitate, it is an infallible Token that he will die. This did truly once happen to *R. Gamaliel's* Son, who being very sick, his Father sent two Servants to *R. Hanina*, to desire him to pray to God for his recovery; which when he had done, he told the Messengers their Petition was heard, and so dismiss'd them; and after that the Fever abated, and great hopes of his recovery appear'd. The Scripture likewise informs us, that the Widow of *Sarepta's* Son was recovered by the *Prayers* of *Elias*, and that *Elisha* by his Prayers restor'd the *Shunamite's* Son to Life: Therefore without doubt *fervent Prayer* is exceeding effectual for the preservation or recovery of Health.

The third Remedy is, a Change of the Name. And this is very common among the *Jews*, when they are in great danger of their Lives; and it is perform'd in the

Synagogue with extraordinary Ceremony, and they always add the Name, to the word *Life*. The reaſon of their doing it, is this; for, ſay they, though the Change of the Name does not alter the Subſtance; yet notwithſtanding it cauſes ſome variation, in as much as every one is diſtinguiſh'd by his *Name*. Beſides, they will have this ſignifie an affection of the mind, and a reſolution of amending their Life, which was ſo bad before, that they did not deſerve to be heard by God. Some are of opinion, that when they change their Name, they change their Fortune; as appears in the Example of *Abraham*; for he was not ſo rich when his Name was *Abram*, as he was, when he was call'd *Abraham*. While he was *Abram*, he was only the Father of *Meſopotamia*, but when he was *Abraham*, he was Father of the Kingdoms of the World. So while his Wife was call'd *Sarai*, ſhe was only a private Miſtreſs; but when ſhe took the Name of *Sarah*, ſhe was Miſtreſs of the World. In like manner *Jacob* after his Victory over the *Edomites*, was call'd *Iſrael*, in token of his future Conqueſts: For while the Captivity continued, the People were *Jahacob*, i. e. trodden down by the *Gentiles*. So *Moſes* when he ſent the Spies to *Canaan*, chang'd the Name of *Oſea* into *Joſhua*; becauſe fore-ſeeing (by his prophetick

phetick Spirit) *Joſhua*'s Succeſs, he ſaid to him, the Lord ſhall preſerve thee from the Malice of the Spies. No doubt but there are other proper Names in the Scripture, which have a peculiar Signification. So *Eſau* ſaid to his Brother *Jacob*, thou art truly call'd *Jacob*, that is, a Deceiver, for thou haſt deceived me twice, *Gen.* 26. 36. So *Abigail* truly call'd her Husband *Nabal*, that is, a Fool, 1 *Sam.* 25. 25. Likewiſe, *Naomi* (*Ruth*'s Mother-in-Law) ſaid, call me not *Naomi*, i. e. pleaſant, call me *Marah*, i. e. bitter, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me, *Ruth*, c. 1. 20. After the ſame manner, ſick People have great hopes of their recovery from the *Etymology of Life*, if other means are us'd beſides.

Laſtly, The fourth Remedy is a Change of Works. This is laſt *in order*, but ought to be our firſt Care: For certainly the Repentance of our paſt Sins prevails much with God: *Nineveh* was to have been overthrown within forty Days, but upon their Repentance God turn'd the Evil from them. So King *Ahab* upon his Repentance, intreated God that he might not ſee the Evil in his Days. Hence the *Talmudiſts* ſay, that Repentance prolongeth Man's Life. And in another place, ſpeaking of the Efficacy of Repentance, they ſay, that God by reaſon of it will revoke.

and alter his Sentence. Theſe are the four ſupernatural Means of recovering Health; to which ſome add faſting, whether it be by thoſe of our own Family, or the Poor whom we have oblig'd with our *Alms*. For when *Haman* threatned the *Iſraelites* with inhumane Uſage, *Heſter* and *Mordecai*, and all the *Jews* faſted very ſtrictly. *Ezra* alſo approv'd of it, and frequently practis'd it. And it is ſaid to *Daniel*, ch. 10. 12. *From the firſt day that thou didſt ſet thine heart to underſtand, and to chaſten thy ſelf before thy God, thy words were heard.* Here we muſt take notice, that by a revocation of a Sentence or a Decree, *R. Joſeph Albo* does not mean a Divine Decree, but a *Celeſtial Sign*. And therefore, when any great Misfortune is threatned to a Man by the influence of the Planets, that danger (ſays he) is remov'd by vertuous Actions. For inſtance, by the Power of the Planets the Ship, that a Man deſigns to go into, will certainly be caſt away: Now God hinders this Man from his deſign by ſickneſs, or ſome other way; in the mean time the Ship is loſt, and the Man eſcapes. *Aben Ezra* is of this opinion; for upon the 34th Ch. of *Exod.* he ſays, Suppoſe by the influence of the Planets certain Ruine attends any City, and the Inhabitants thereof by ſincere Repentance appeaſe God's Wrath, what ſhall come to paſs? Shall they

they be involv'd in the common Deſtruction of the City? No, God ſhall put them in mind to go up into the Mountains and high Places, that they may ſecure themſelves: After which the Fields ſhall be overflow'd with a mighty Torrent of Water, and the City ſhall be deſtroy'd. So by this means the Event ſhall anſwer the Determination of the Planets, and yet the People eſcape too. For as *David* ſays, *Pſ.* 33. 18, 19. *Behold the Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, and upon them that hope in his Mercy; to deliver their Soul from Death, and to keep them alive in Famine.*

Which way ſoever the Sentiments of the *Rabbins* are explain'd, this is certainly true, that Piety is much more efficacious than the Planets; ſo that when the Sentence of Death is pronounc'd (as it happen'd to *Hezekiah*) that is not ineffectual, except God has alter'd it before. I ſhall conclude all here with the formal Speech, that the Scholars of *Pombeditha* uſe when they go out of the School, *May he that is the Auther of Life, grant unto us a long, happy, and an honeſt Life.*

BOOK III.

Concerning God's Preſcience, and Man's Free-Will.

SECT. 1. I Am oblig'd now to ſpeak ſomething concerning God's Preſcience, and thoſe Arguments which are urg'd againſt Prognoſtications, becauſe ſome of a contrary Opinion have made Objections againſt what I treated of in the former Books.

Thus they Reaſon: If God exactly knew all things, and diſpos'd them in ſuch Order, from Eternity, how can it be in the Power of Man to prolong or ſhorten his Life? For Example, if God infallibly knew from all Eternity, that *Abraham* would live 175 years, by reaſon of that ſound and healthful Conſtitution which he had given him, it's very plain that *Abraham* could not alter that Determination. Now if this be true, it is demanded how God's Preſcience, and Man's Free-will, (two ſuch contrary things) are conſiſtent together? I muſt confeſs, That I am very unwilling to engage in ſo nice and intricate a Controverſie. *Euclid* once being ask'd many things about God, only reply'd, *Thus I very well know, that God abhors*

abhors thoſe that are too curious, and inquiſitive; nevertheleſs, by the aſſiſtance of the Scripture, I believe I can illuſtrate and explain theſe things.

There were ſome Men heretofore, who, when they could not reconcile God's foreknowledge, with Man's Free-will, deny'd both; as *Cicero*, who, that he might maintain the Freedom of humane Actions, would allow no Preſcience in God, which is well obſerv'd by St. *Auguſtine*. *Cicero*, ſays he, *That he might make Men free, made them Sacrilegious*. There are others that deny Man's Free-will, that they may eſtabliſh the foreknowledge of God. Wherefore I deſign to confirm and ſettle theſe two things, before I proceed to a Re-conciliation. And in the firſt Place, to prove that God knew all future contingent things from Eternity; after that, I ſhall maintain that a Man may prolong, or ſhorten his Life as he pleaſes.

SECT. 2. The firſt is plain and indiſputable, ſays *Maimonides*, That all Perfections may be found in God; but all Imperfections muſt be remov'd from him. And it is very evident, That the Ignorance of any thing is an Imperfection, and that God is ignorant of nothing; for it may be clearly prov'd out of the Scripture, that God had a particular knowledge of *Adam*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, *Jacob*, *Moſes* and

and ſeveral others, Gen. 18. 19. Exod. 3. 7, Deut. 29. 18. upon this Account *Moſes*, and *Aaron* thus addreſs themſelves to God. *O God, the God of the Spirits of all Fleſh*, Numb. 16. 22.

If we look into the Prophets, we ſhall find that they teſtifie the ſame thing. *Iſaiah* 48. 8. *I knew that thou wouldſt deal very treacherouſly*. Jer. 1. 5. *Before I form'd thee in the Belly I knew thee*, chap. 12. 3. Ezek. 37 3. Dan. 2. 22. *He revealeth the deep and ſecret things, he knoweth what is in the darkneſs, and the light dwelleth with him.* But the moſt eminent Teſtimony of God's Preſcience is recorded in the 139 *Pſalm*, for ſays *David*, v. 1. *O Lord thou haſt ſearched me, and known me, i. e.* Thou didſt know from Eternity, as well as now, all my Actions. v. 2. *Thou knoweſt my down ſitting, and mine upriſing, i. e.* all my particular Actions. *Thou underſtandeſt my thoughts afar off, i. e.* you know my Works ſo exactly from Eternity, that you alſo knew my very Thoughts: Then he concludes, v. 7. *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit, or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? i. e.* When thy Knowledge and Providenee, O God, are above every thing, there is no place for me to fly unto, for thou art every where; from whence it follows, That God takes Care of every one. Hither we may refer, that which ſome of

the

the Ancients report of the three Men, which God convinc'd of their miſtake, becauſe they thought that he did not know every thing. The firſt was *Cain*, who, when God ask'd him, where his Brother *Abel* was? (as if he did not know that he had kill'd him) anſwer'd, *Am I my Brother's keeper? Gen.* 4. 9. The next was *Balaam*, who, when God ſaid unto him, *What Men are theſe with thee?* Reply'd, *Balak the Son of Zippor, the King of Moab*, Numb. 22. 9, 10. The laſt was *Hezekiah*, who, when *Iſaiah* ask'd about the Ambaſſadors, which *Berodach-Baladan* had ſent to him, ſaying what ſaid theſe Men, *And from whence came they unto thee?* anſwer'd, *They are come from a far Country*, 2 King. 20. 14. Though it might ſeem to be a ſmall Fault, for the King to offend againſt the Prophet, yet he ſhould have conſider'd, that he was a Prophet of God, who knows all things before they are tranſacted.

SECT. 3. I ſhall proceed now to ſhew God's foreknowledge of things that are future. And a great and invincible Argument of this, are God's Predictions of future contingent things, which were afterwards fulfilled. As for inſtance: Firſt, God ſaid to *Moſes*, Exod 3. 19. *I am ſure that the King of Egypt will not let you go*; and ſo it came to paſs.

2. God

2. God foretels the Deſtruction of the *Iſraelites*, Deut. 4. 25: *When thou ſhall beget Childrens Children, and ſhalt have remain'd long in the Land.* Here the Phraſe *remain'd long*, according to the *Hebrew*, makes up the number 846. for ſo long they enjoy'd the *Holy Land*, and then were expell'd for their Iniquities, which depended upon their Free-wills.

3. The 28th. *Chap.* of *Deut.* contains ſome Prophecies, which were fulfill'd under the firſt and ſecond Temple. I have treated largely of theſe in my Book, of the *Divin.* of *Moſes*'s Law, from whence I ſhall borrow ſome things now: The 28th. *Chap.* of *Deut.* wherein the Curſes againſt the rebellious *Iſraelites* are inſerted, is divided into two parts, beginning at the 15. *v.* and ſo to the 49th. and from thence to the end. Thus they begin, *Curſed ſhalt thou be in the City*, &c. the Reaſon is preſently added, v. 20. *Becauſe of the wickedneſs of thy doings, whereby thou haſt forſaken me, i. e.* for Idolatry, which was notorious under the firſt Temple; for that Phraſe to forſake, always ſignifies in Scripture to forſake God, and to worſhip Idols. So it follows, *The Lord ſhall make the Peſtilence cleave unto thee, &c. The Lord ſhall cauſe thee to be ſmitten before thine Enemies, thou ſhalt go out one way againſt them, and flee ſeven ways before them*, which did not happen

pen under the ſecond Temple, (for then they were ſtrong and valiant) but under the firſt. Hence *Iſaiah*, (lamenting the great weakneſs of the People) ſays, Chap. 22. 3. *All that are found in thee are bound together, which have fled from far.* As to what relates to the other Curſes, the *Jews* were ſadly ſenſible of their Events, in the firſt Calamities that fell upon them, as in the Captivity of *Reuben*, *Gad*, half the Tribe of *Manaſſeh*, and in other Captivities of the Tribe of *Judah*. Then was fulfill'd that Curſe, v. 30. *Thou ſhalt betroth a Wife and another Man ſhall lie with her.* But when it is ſaid, v. 36. *The Lord ſhall bring thee and thy King, which thou ſhalt ſet over thee, unto a Nation which neither thou nor thy Fathers have known; and there ſhalt thou ſerve other Gods, Wood and Stone*, no doubt but this muſt be underſtood of *Zedekiah*, and *Jehoiakim*, who were Captives in *Babylonia*, which was a Land unknown to them, and where they worſhip'd Idols. And tho' after the Conqueſt of the *Holy Land*, a remnant of the People was left, yet it is ſaid concerning them, v. 38. *Thou ſhalt carry much ſeed out into the Field, and ſhalt gather but little in, &c.* v. 43. *The ſtranger that is within thee ſhall get up above thee very high*; which muſt be underſtood of the *Samaritans*, who the King of *Aſſyria*, drove out of *Samaria*,

Samaria, and the adjacent places. Becauſe *Moſes* here leaves off ſpeaking of the Deſtruction of the firſt Temple, he ſubjoyns the Cauſe of ſo great an Evil, v. 47. *Becauſe thou ſervedſt not the Lord thy God, &c.* ſo much for the firſt part of the Chapter.

The 2d. part begins thus, *The Lord ſhall bring a Nation againſt thee from far, from the end of the Earth, as ſwift as the Eagle flyeth, a Nation whoſe Tongue thou ſhalt not underſtand; a Nation of fierce Countenance, &c.* It is obſervable that the word *Nation* is here thrice mention'd; for three times *Jeruſalem* felt the Power of the *Romans*, (when they bore an Eagle for their Enſign.) Firſt when the *Romans* deſir'd the aſſiſtance of *Hyrcanus* and *Ariſtobulus*, (the Sons of *Alexander*) againſt *Pompey*. Afterwards when *Soſius* ſuccour'd *Herod* againſt *Antigonus*, the Son of *Ariſtobulus*. Laſtly, when the City was beſieg'd, and together with the Temple utterly deſtroy'd, by *Veſpaſian* and his Son *Titus*. Wherefore when *Moſes* ſays, *A Nation ſhall come from far*, it muſt be underſtood of *Rome*; *and from the end of the Earth*, it muſt be underſtood of thoſe Nations, which *Veſpaſian* ſent for to aſſiſt him, out of *England*, *France*, *Spain* and other parts of the World. In theſe Wars, all the Evils and Calamities that were foretold, happen'd to the *Jews*. 1. Famine, *v.* 53. 2*dly*. Great Diſtreſs, *v.* 5, 7. 3*dly*, Plagues,

Plagues, *v.* 59. 4ly. a vaſt Diminution of the People, *v.* 62. 5ly. a Deſolation, *v.* 63. To which may be added, the 6th. Evil, a Forgetfulneſs of their Religion, *v.* 64. which is chiefly come to paſs, in this preſent Captivity, by Reaſon of the ſad Calamities which the *Jews* undergo in *France*, *England* and *Spain*. Laſtly, he ſays, *v.* 68. *The Lord ſhall bring thee into Egypt again with ſhips.* Though *Veſpaſian* baniſh'd the *Jews* into ſeveral Countries, yet *Egypt* only is nam'd to their Diſgrace, as if he would ſay, ye ſhall be carried Captive into that Land, out of which ye came with Triumph. Here *Moſes* makes an end of the Curſes of the People, but returns to them at the 39th. Chapter. Afterwards at the 30th. Chapter, he Comforts them with the hopes of Bleſſings, and a return from the *utmoſt parts of the Earth*, v. 4. In this all the Prophets imitate *Moſes*, who, after a Repetition of a Catalogue of afflictions, that ſhall come upon them, ſubjoyn ſome conſolatory Hopes; upon which Account the *Talmudiſts* report, That R. *Aquiba* laught at the Deſtruction of the Temple, when all the reſt of the wiſe Men lamented. And being ask'd the Reaſon of it, he anſwer'd, *After a Storm comes a Calm*, when theſe Evils are over we may expect ſome good; for God as certainly brings one as the other.

4. That came to paſs which God foretold to *Moſes*, *Deut.* 31. 16.

5. God foretold that the Song which *Moſes* was to ſpeak to them, ſhould not be forgotten, *Deut.* 31. 21. And this has been verified in their Poſterity to this day.

SECT. 4. We read in the Scripture of many things that came to paſs, which were foretold ſeveral years before.

1. In *Joſhua* 6. 26. which happen'd many years after in the Reign of *Ahab*. 1 King. 16. 34. *In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho; he laid the Foundation thereof in Abiram his firſt born, and ſet up the gates in his youngeſt Son Segub.*

2. The building of a Temple in *Egypt* was foretold 600 years before it was begun. This Prophecy was fulfill'd in the time of *Onias* the High-Prieſt, who having obtain'd leave of *Ptolemy*, and *Cleopatra* erected a Temple at a place call'd *Bubaſtus*. *F. Joſephus* (in his *Antiq.* of the *Jews B.* 13. *c.* 6.) thus relates the words of *Onias*, *May it pleaſe your Majeſties to grant me the favour to purifie that Temple which is Dedicated to no Deity, and is fallen down, and to build another in its place, to the moſt high God, in the ſame form and bigneſs of that which is at Jeruſalem, where we ſhall pray for the ſafety of*

you

you and your Children, that the Jews, who live in Egypt, and reſorting thither, for their own Convenience, may be more uſeful to you. For Iſaiah the Prophet foretold, that there ſhould be an Altar to the Lord in the midſt of the Land of Egypt, Chap. 19. 19. In this Circumſtance our *Rabbins* agree with *Joſephus*, for they refer theſe words to this Temple. But in *Seder Olam* they are of a contrary Opinion; there they ſay, That after the Victory which God gave them over the *Aſſyrians*, great part of them that were left were carried Captive to *Jeruſalem* by *Hezekiah*. Now theſe Forces *Sennacherib* had levy'd out of *Æthiopia* and *Egypt*: Hence it came to paſs, that theſe Men being convinc'd by the Greatneſs of the Miracle embrac'd the Jewiſh Religion, and returning into their own Countrey, erected an Altar to the Honour and Glory of God. And when Friendſhip and Commerce began to increaſe among them, and the *Jews*, they by degrees acquir'd the knowledge of our Language, according to that of *Iſaiah*, Chap. 19. 18. *In that day ſhall five Cities in the Land of Egypt ſpeak the Language of Canaan.* Thus this Prophecy was plainly fulfill'd.

3. Long before the Reſtoration of the *Jews*, and the building of the ſecond Temple by the Command of *Cyrus*, King of the *Perſians*, it was thus foretold of this

Cyrus, Iſaiah 44. 28. *That ſaith of Cyrus he is my Shepherd, and ſhall perform all my Pleaſure, even ſaying to Jeruſalem, thou ſhalt be built; and to the Temple thy Foundation ſhall be laid*, he ſays to the Temple, *Thou ſhalt be founded*, not thou ſhalt be built: The Reaſon is this, becauſe of the Accuſations, and Complaints of *Rehum* and *Shimſhai* (in the Reign of *Cyrus*) the Temple was not finiſh'd, (only the Foundation laid) till the ſecond year of *Darius*, which was 22 years after. But when *Cyrus* had given abundance of Gold and Silver towards the Re-edification of the Temple, and had releas'd a great many Slaves; therefore it is ſaid in the next Chapter, v. 13. *I have rais'd him up in Righteouſneſs, and I will direct all his ways, he ſhall build my City, and ſhall let go my Captives, not for Price, nor Reward, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts.*

4. It was likewiſe foretold by the Prophet, that the Temple ſhould be deſtroy'd by the *Jews* themſelves: For after the tedious Lamentations of the People in the time of the Captivity, he adds theſe words, Chap. 49. 14. *But Zion ſaid the Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Thy Children ſhall make haſte; thy Deſtroyers, and they that made thee waſt ſhall go forth of thee*, v. 17. This was fulfill'd when *Simon* and *Jonathan*, and others by their inteſtine

inteſtine Seditions, haſten'd the Deſtruction of the Temple. Whence *F. Joſephus* ſpeaks thus of the Wars of the *Jews*, *B.* 7. *c.* 4. *Who is ignorant of the Writings of the ancient Prophets, and their Prophecies, wherein this wretched City is foretold to be deſtroy'd by thoſe that being born Jews, murder our own Nation, and now not only the City, but the Temple is full of the dead Bodies?*

5. *Iſaiah* the Prophet ſaith, Chap. 54. 17. *No Weapon that is form'd againſt thee ſhall proſper; and every tongue that ſhall riſe againſt thee in Judgment, thou ſhalt condemn. This is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, and their Righteouſneſs is of me ſaith the Lord.* This Prophecy was alſo fulfill'd, for almoſt all Nations have oppos'd the *Jewiſh* Law, ſome by Arguments, and ſome by Force. Therefore it is ſaid, *no Weapon* (of War) *and every Tongue*, &c. For Writers in the midſt of their Endeavours have wanted Succeſs. Then ſays the Prophet, *ſhall not Proſper*, &c. This is manifeſtly verified in the Example of *Nebuchadnezzar*, who ſeduc'd all the *Jews* to worſhip Idols, except *Daniel*, *Hananiah*, *Miſhael*, and *Azariah*, who did not renounce their Religion. But what was the Conſequence? God inflicted condign Puniſhment upon the King, and *Truth was reſtor'd again.* The *Græcians* alſo were no leſs cruel and ſevere to the *Jews*: For they compell'

them to prophane the Sabbath, and omit Circumciſion, but what was worſe, to write upon their Garments, *We have no Portion in the Lord God of Iſrael.* And theſe words they were forc'd to burn into the Horns of their Oxen, if they would make uſe of them. After this manner the *Jews* were perſecuted for 52 years; at laſt God reveng'd himſelf upon *Antiochus*, and all the *Græcians*, by the Subverſion of the Empire and the Laws, while the *Jews* preſerv'd theirs. In remembrance of ſo rigorous a Perſecution, the old Men, whenſoever they relate, the Edicts of the *Græcians* againſt the *Jews*, always conclude with this Speech, *And let Peace be upon Iſrael.* And here I may ſpeak of *Emanuel*, King of *Portugal*, What Advantage was it to him, to compel the *Jews* by Cruelty to become Chriſtians? He was ſo far from advancing his Intereſt by it, that it was a vaſt Prejudice to his Kingdom: For the Nation was almoſt depopulated, the *Jews* retiring into ſuch Countries, where they might be more Civilly treated, and where they might more freely exerciſe their Religion. Beſides, he died within a few years after; and after all, he did not obtain ſo much Honour by it as he expected. *Oſorius*, the Kings Hiſtoriographer, *lib.* 1. ſeems to rebuke him very ſharply, and freely for that thing, when he ſays,

Thus

This was done neither out of Law or Religion. What then? Do you endeavour to oblige a Contumacious People to believe those things, which they so much despise and abhor? Do you pretend to abridge the Freedom of Man's Will, and check unruly Minds? But that is impossible, neither does Christ, the most Holy God, approve of it. He desires a voluntary, not a compulsive, Sacrifice from us, neither would he have our Consciences impos'd upon, but that our Wills should be invited, and courted to the Practice of true Religion; and in another place, he calls this Action *wicked and unjust*. See how the Prophets Prediction is fulfill'd in him, *shall not Prosper*, viz. while he endeavours to compel the *Jews* to renounce their Religion. Hither may we refer what is mention'd in Solomon's Song, Chap. 6. 13. *Return, Return, O Shulamite: Return, Return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the Company of two Armies.* It is four times said *Return*, in respect of the four Monarchies, under which the *Israelites* liv'd: For the *Jews* are this perfect *Shulamite*. For as much as the *Gentiles* endeavour'd to divert us from the Worship of the true God, by the Promises of honourable and noble Rewards; yet the *Shulamite* courageously answers, That he does not value all the Honours they propose: For they are

much inferior to thoſe Honours, which were exhibited on Mount *Sinai*, to which the Hoſts of *Iſrael*, and the Angelick Choire approach'd, as *David* expreſſes himſelf, *Pſal.* 68. 17. This is very remarkable, that the Laws of *Plato*, *Lycurgus*, and other ſuch wiſe Men are quite decay'd, while *Moſes*'s Statutes continue to this very time, and whoſe Rites and Ceremonies are obſerv'd by ſeveral People.

6. Many things likewiſe have come to paſs which where foretold by *Ezekiel* long before, as that in Chap. 22. 15. *And I will ſcatter thee among the Heathen, and diſperſe thee in the Countries, and will conſume thy Filthineſs out of thee.* This muſt be underſtood of the *Jewiſh* Captivity under the *Romans*, not *Nebuchadnezzar*: For then the *Jews* were not diſpers'd into all parts of the World, neither were they free from Pollution, by Reaſon of their Marriages with Strangers, and the Profanation of the Sabbath and other Sins: Wherefore they were once more lead into Captivity by the *Romans*, and then ſcatter'd all over the World, after that the *Romans* had ſubdued other Nations, and reconcil'd them by the Mildneſs of their Government: Otherwiſe it would have been no eaſie matter to vanquiſh the *Jews* by force. After the *Romans* had Conquer'd them, and turn'd

turn'd 'em out of Doors, they ſettl'd themſelves in *Spain*, *Italy*, *Africk*, *England*, and other Countreys; ſo that it might be juſtly ſaid of them, (as it was of the *Trojans*) that they ſhould eſteem it an Honour to be baniſh'd out of their own Countrey, *For before their Dominion was confin'd, but now they were Lords of all the World.* In the ſame manner the *Jews* after their Baniſhment, (like Plants which are remov'd) were admitted into the moſt populous Cities, and ſeated in the ſecureſt Parts of 'em. We know by Experience that thoſe Cities have flouriſh'd moſt, where the *Jews* have liv'd, upon this Account, becauſe they are very much inclin'd to promote the Trade of Merchandize. Thus we ſee that the Trade of *Lisbon* has mightily decay'd ſince the *Jews* were baniſh'd from thence.

7. So *Ezekiel* in Chap. 36. 13. ſeems to foretell that Calumny which was faſten'd upon ſome of the *Jews*, that they Sacrificed Children, and then drank their Blood. But this ſlander is not unlike that which the *Gentiles* caſt upon the Chriſtians, of their eating Infants, and drinking Men's Blood, as is plain in *Tertullian*'s Apology, *Pineda*'s Eccl. Hiſt. *B.* 11. c. 32. and *Juſtin Martyr*, who for this Reaſon wrote an Apology for the Chriſtians to *Antoninus*. *Euſebius* Biſhop of *Cæſarea*, (B. 5. c. 1.) alſo relates,

relates, that ſome People in *France* us'd to aſperſe the Chriſtians for eating Man's fleſh. But thus it is, *Ambitious and envious Men are eaſily provok'd to ſlander.* Therefore let *John Langius* (in the 71ſt Epiſt. of his firſt B.) ſay what he pleaſes. But I ſolemnly proteſt before the God of *Iſrael*, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, in whoſe Preſence I ſtand, that the *Jews* are ſo far from Sacrificing Children, or eating Men's Fleſh, and drinking their Blood, that they have no Sacrifices at all, and utterly abhor the uſe of any Blood. Though indeed the Law of God does not prohibit abſtinence from all kind of Blood, but only that of Beaſts and Birds; yet in obedience to the Doctrine of the *Rabbins*, they even abſtain from that of Fiſh. Nay, if they perceive the leaſt Particle of Blood in an Egg, they throw it away. And if while they are eating diſcern the leaſt Drop of Blood on their Meat, or Bread, (which may proceed from the Tenderneſs of their Gums) they will not touch it any more, till it is cleans'd, or rather, they fling it away. How is it probable then, that they would drink the Blood of Men, when they can't endure any Blood in their Victuals?

8. That prediction was verified which is ſpoken of in *Hoſea*, c. 3. 4. *For the Children of* Iſrael *ſhall abide many days without a King, and without a Prince, and without a Sacrifice,*

Sacrifice, &c. And this ſeems to be their condition at preſent; and becauſe this was to continue *many days*, therefore *Zion* ſays, *The Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me*, Iſa. 49. 14. Thus *David* alſo ſadly complains of this thing to God, *Pſal.* 89. 20. to the End.

9. The Prophet *Amos* foretells the miſerable Captivity of the *Jews* under *Titus*, Chap. 1. 9. This prediction is meant of thoſe, who eſcaping the Hands of *Titus*, and flying by *Palæſtine*, and the Borders of *Tyrus*, were apprehended by the *Tyrians*, and ſent back to *Edom*, i. e. to *Titus* and his Army: They forgetting the Covenant which their Fathers had made with the *Iſraelites*, whom they call'd *Brethren*, as is expreſs'd in 1 *Kings* 9. 13. *What Cities are theſe which thou haſt given me, my Brother?*

10. *Jonas* ſaid, *Ch.* 3. 4. *Yet forty days and* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed.* This Prophecy alſo had its Event; for it was conditional, *viz.* unleſs it would repent. Now their Repentance was the Cauſe of God's altering his Sentence, and averting that Deſtruction which he threatned.

11. *Haggai* the Prophet ſays, *Ch.* 2. 9. *The Glory of this latter Houſe ſhall be greater than of the former, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, and in this place will I give Peace.* Some underſtand, by the *latter Houſe*, a third Tem-

Temple, which the *Jews* expect. For they think if the Prophet had meant *Eſdras*'s Temple, he would have ſaid the *Second*, not the *Latter*; becauſe by ſaying the Latter, he implies a Middle one: Another reaſon of their Opinion is, becauſe it is ſaid, *In this place will I give peace*: Now, ſay they, under the Second there were a great many Wars. Others underſtand it of the ſecond Temple, among whom are *R. David Kimchi*, and moſt of the Antients. For this ſeem'd to excell the former; Firſt, in reſpect of Duration, becauſe that laſted but 410, and this 420 Years. 2ly, in reſpect of the great Eſteem it was in among Foreign Princes. Laſtly, upon the Account of the great Preſents that they made to it. For *Darius* and *Artaxerxes* generouſly beſtow'd ſeveral Gifts towards building the Temple, and Divine Sacrifices. *Alexander* the Great highly reverenc'd the Chief Prieſt, and deſir'd that he would offer Sacrifices to God for him. No body can be ignorant of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*'s Bounty towards it. *Antiochus* King of *Greece*, (by a publick Edict) forbad all Strangers to enter the Temple, and prophane that Place, which the *Jews* had conſecrated for the Service of their Religion; the ſame was done by *Demetrius*. To this we may refer, what was urg'd (among many other things) by a *Jewiſh* Prieſt

Prieſt in defence of his Cauſe, at the time when the *Jews* and the *Samaritans* diſputed, before *Alexander* the Great, about the Honour and Dignity of the Temple; ſays he, This Temple has been much reverenc'd by all the Kings of *Aſia*, who have beſtow'd upon it many noble Donatives. We read in *F. Joſephus contr. Appion*, that *Ptolemy Evergetes*, after his Conqueſt of *Syria*, offer'd Sacrifices at *Jeruſalem* after the *Jewiſh* manner to the true God, and not to Idols. *Pompey* the Great did not dare to touch, much leſs to rifle, the Treaſury of the Temple. It was a Miſtake of *Cicero*'s (in his *Orat pro Plan.*) and St. *Auguſtin*'s too, to ſay that he did not do it, becauſe he would not be thought too ambitious. I am ſure this Reaſon is too abſurd; for he might have done it, if he pleaſed, by the Law of Arms. But the true Cauſe of his forbearance, was the mighty veneration which he had entertain'd for the Temple *Philo* the *Jew*, out of a Letter of *Agrippa*'s to the Emperour *Caius*, reports theſe things. *Cæſar Aug.* (out of reſpect to the Temple) commanded that a Sacrifice ſhould be offer'd every day out of his own Revenue. And *Julia Auguſta*, his Conſort, beſtow'd ſeveral magnificent Gifts upon it. It was alſo much oblig'd to the Generoſity of *Cleopatra*, Queen of *Egypt*. *Tiberius* every Year of his Reign com-

commanded, that a Sacrifice ſhould be offer'd to God out of his Tribute; and ſo did *Nero*. But when *Eleazar* very imprudently refus'd to admit of *Nero*'s Sacrifice, the Emperour chang'd his mind, and grievouſly perſecuted the *Jews*. I ſhall not make mention of thoſe, who, ſeeing the Religion of the *Jews*, were converted to the Worſhip of the true God. It is very remarkable, that all the time that *Herod* was building the Temple it did not rain, which was done (no doubt) for the greater Honour of it. All that I have ſaid here was to ſhew, that the Prophecy of *Haggai* is to be underſtood of the Second Temple.

SECT. 6. There are other Prophecies likewiſe which were exactly fullfill'd.

1. *Daniel* not only foretold the four Monarchies which ſhould Rule over *Jeruſalem*, but he expreſs'd the very Qualities and Nature of them. For one part of that Image (that was repreſented to him compounded of four ſeveral Metals) which was Gold, denoted the Kingdom of *Babylon*, and that exceeded all the reſt in Power. That part which was Silver ſignified the Kingdom of the *Medes*, but this was not ſo extenſive. That which was Braſs ſignified the *Græcian* Empire, whoſe Fame (by the Exploits of *Alexander* the

the Great) was diffus'd all over the World, like that which makes the greateſt ſound. That part which was Iron ſet forth the *Roman*. And for as much as the Feet and Toes were part Clay, and part Iron, that ſignified the *Roman* and *Mahometan* Empires, which would always be at War, and never make Peace, like Clay and Iron which cannot be mingl'd together. And it ſeems to be intimated in *Chap.* 2. *v.* 43. that theſe two Nations would never agree. All theſe things we have ſeen fulfill'd. But here we muſt take notice, that the Prophet immediately mentions the Golden Statue which *Nebuchadnezzar* ſet up, on purpoſe that his Subjects ſhould worſhip it. Now this was not without a Reaſon. For the King conſidering that the Image which he had ſeen in his Dream, denoted the four Monarchies, and that the firſt was his own which he now enjoy'd, reſolv'd to fruſtrate the Deſign of Heaven; upon which Account he order'd a Golden Statue to be made, and commanded his Subjects to worſhip it, thinking by this means he ſhould engage the Hearts of the common People, aad not only eternize his own Name, but eſtabliſh his Kingdom for ever. But, alas! God's deſigns are not ſo eaſily diſappointed by humane Contrivances.

2. *Da-*

2. *Daniel* interprets *Nebuchadnezzar's* Dream of the Tree after this manner, C. 4. *v.* 25. *They ſhall drive thee from Men, and thy dwelling ſhall be with the Beaſts of the Field*, &c. and ſo it came to paſs: For not long after, the King falling into a great fit of Melancholy, left his Palace, and ſhun'd the Sight and Converſation of Men, and liv'd ſeven Years in a Wilderneſs, taking no care at all of himſelf: So that his Hair was grown like Eagle's Feathers, and his Nails like Bird's Claws. This is the true meaning of the Prophecy, not that he was really turn'd into a Beaſt as ſome imagine, like the Fables of *Ovid*, and other Poets. For if that had been, he would not have thought of God, of Repentance, and Amendment of Life, and earneſtly implor'd the Mercy of God, which he afterwards obtain'd; this is the Act of a rational mind, which he would not have had, if he had been a Beaſt. Becauſe a rational and irrational mind cannot be in one and the ſame Subject, at the ſame time.

3. While *Belſhazzar* was feaſting with his Lords, an Angel's hand was ſeen writing upon the Wall; this the wiſe Men could neither read nor underſtand, becauſe they read it the wrong way.

But

But when *Daniel* came he read it right, and interpreting it, ſaid to the King, *God hath numbred thy Kingdom, and finiſh'd it. Thou art weigh'd in the Balances and art found wanting. Thy Kingdom is divided and given to the* Medes *and* Perſians, *Dan.* 5. And theſe things truly came upon him, for abuſing the Veſſels of the Temple. For the Eunuchs believing the Prophecy, cut off his Head the next Night, and carried it to the *Perſians*, (who had been vanquiſh'd the day before) and adviſ'd them to ſeize upon the Government. The *Perſians* diſcerning God's Providence, and the Vertue of *Daniel*, were very favourable to the *Jews* upon this Account.

4. After a conſideration of the four Monarchies from the Viſion of the *Lion, the Bear, the Leopard, and the terrible Beaſt*, Chap. 7. he ſays, the ſecond Beaſt (which ſignified the *Perſian* Empire) had *three*

Ribs in the Mouth of it, in as much as the *Perſian*, *Median*, and *Babylonian* united into one. Now becauſe *Cyrus* was ſuckl'd by a *Bitch*, therefore he ſays, his Subjects would ſay by reaſon of his Cruelty, *Ariſe, eat much Fleſh*. The third Beaſt (which repreſented the third Monarchy) he ſays had four Heads, which denoted the four Generals that ſucceeded *Alexander* the Great. The fourth and fierceſt Beaſt (ſetting forth the *Romans*) he ſays, had ten Horns, becauſe from *Julius Cæſar* to *T. Veſpaſian* (who deſtroy'd *Jeruſalem*) there were ten Emperours. Some there are who by the little Horn, which was in that Beaſt, underſtand the Pope of *Rome*. Thus likewiſe was this Prophecy fulfill'd.

5. After this, *Daniel* propheſies no more in the *Chaldee* Tongue but in the *Hebrew*, becauſe both the *Babylonian* Empire, and the 70 Years Captivity of the *Jews* were expir'd. In this Language he relates the Viſion of the *Ram*, c. 8 having two Horns, which repreſent the *Perſian* Empire, under *Darius*, and the *Median* under *Cyrus*. This Ram (which came out of the Eaſt) he ſays, wag'd War with the other three parts of the World; and ſo it came to paſs. For out of the Weſt it was oppos'd by an *He Goat*, which was *Alexander* the Great; who may juſtly claim that Sir-name, if we com-

compare him with *Darius*, whom he conquer'd. The Prophet intimates the Power of *Alexander* by the *notable Horn* that the Goat had between his Eyes. And *he ſmote the Ram*, in as much as when he was both in the flower of his Life and his Kingdom, he loſt them both. *When he was ſtrong the great Horn was broken:* For *Alexander* the Great (as *Plutarch* informs us) being at *Babylon*, and having given Audience to ſeveral Ambaſſadours, was there poiſon'd by *Antipater's* Sons. The Prophet adds, *that four notable Horns came up in the room of that which was broken*, by which he means the four Generals, who ſucceeded *Alexander*. Again, he ſays, *that out of one of theſe came forth a little Horn*, which repreſents *Antiochus Epiphanes*, who took *Jeruſalem* and ſlew the Prieſts, and the Holy Men, and took away their *daily Sacrifice*, which is noted in theſe words; *It caſt down ſome of the Hoſt of Heaven.*

6. In the next place follows *Daniel's* Prophecy of the 70 Weeks, of which there are various Explications; for Authors wonderfully differ in reckoning their Number. See *Dan.* 9. 24. to the End, where the Prophecy is ſet down. In order to ſome Explication of it, I muſt needs ſay, that by comparing this Prophecy with the precedent ones, *Daniel* ſeems to be much

troubl'd about the four Monarchies, and thoſe Calamities which were to fall upon the *Jews*, and beſides, becauſe he receiv'd this Command, *c.* 8. *v.* 26. *Shut thou up the Viſion, for it ſhall be for many days.* The next words denote his Concern, *v.* 27. *I fainted and was ſick many days.* He tells us likewiſe, *He was aſtoniſh'd at the Viſion, and that none underſtood it.* On one ſide he was conſidering the Expiration of the 70 Years, when the *Jews* would be releas'd from their Captivity; on the other ſide he was thinking of the diſmal Oppreſſions of the *Jews* under the four Monarchies; and then he was afraid, that the Captivity would laſt longer by reaſon of the Wickedneſs of the People. Then it follows, *c.* 9. *I* Daniel *underſtood by Books the number of the years, whereof the word of the Lord came to* Jeremiah *the Prophet, that he would accompliſh* 70 *Years in the Deſolation of* Jeruſalem. Immediately after this he pray'd, *v.* 4. *And I pray'd unto the Lord my God,* becauſe God is ſometimes mov'd by Prayer to revoke his Decrees. Aſſoon as he had done praying, an Angel ſtood by him, and ſaid, *I am now come forth to give thee ſkill and underſtanding,* v. 22. Then he ſpeedily adds, *v.* 24. 70 *Weeks are determin'd,* &c. Here he is inform'd of the preſent Liberty, and the future miſerable Captivity of the Peo-

ple,

ple, by which they ſhould be cleans'd from all their Iniquity; for the *Babylonian* Captivity continu'd but 70 Years, which was inflicted for their Evil ways in not obſerving the 7th Year, and not giving reſt to the Land. But the 70 Weeks of *Daniel* make up 440 Years. Therefore when he ſaith, *they are determin'd upon thy People to finiſh the Tranſgreſſion, and to make an end of ſins*, he means, that after the End of 440 Years, the Captivity of the People ſhall enſue, by which they ſhall be purg'd from Idolatry, Murder and Adultery, which are the three greateſt Sins. After this ſhall ſucceed Eternal Righteouſneſs, *i. e.* there ſhall be no more ſin, as *Iſaiah* ſays, *c.* 60. 21. *Thy People ſhall be all Righteous.* And this all the Prophets confirm. *Daniel* moreover adds, *to ſeal up the Viſion and Prophecy*; as if he would ſay, that all the Prophecies ſhould be fulfilled, or elſe he means that there would be more Prophecies. For God ſays in *Joel*, c. 2. 28. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all Fleſh, and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall propheſie. Daniel* alſo ſays, *to anoint the moſt Holy*, i. e. the Holy of Holies; for under the ſecond Temple it was not anointed, becauſe it was not to continue for ever. And after the End of theſe things, *Daniel* ſays, *Prophecy and Sacrifices, which we have not now, ſhall be reſtor'd.*

The Holy Scripture divides these 70 Weeks into three Parts. The first contains 7 Weeks, which make up 49 Years: For from the Destruction of the first Temple, to the building of the Second, (which was done by *Cyrus*'s leave) were 49 Years. Now by *the anointed Prince*, which he speaks of here, he either means the High-Priest, who us'd to be anointed with Holy Oil, and is therefore call'd *Messias*; or else *Zerubbabel* Governour of *Judah*, and a Prince of the Family of *David*; or else of *Cyrus* himself, for *Isaiah* thus saith of him, *c.* 45. 1. *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to* Cyrus

The next Division is into threescore and two Weeks, *when the Street shall be built again*, v. 25 i. e. from the first Building of the second Temple to the beginning of its overthrow (which was when *Vespasian* came into *Judæa*) shall be 434 Years: For the 13 Years of *Cyrus* (under whom they began to build it) the six of *Artaxerxes*, and the two Years Reign of *Darius* (in whose last Year it was finish'd) make up 21 Years. Then the *Babylonian* Captivity took up 70 Years more. Now if we compute the 414, which were between the second Year of *Darius*, and the coming of *Vespasian* into *Judæa*, the whole Number of 434 Years are made up, which are the 69 Weeks

Weeks of *Daniel*. As for the expreſſion, *in troublous Times*, the meaning was explain'd by the Event. For when the *Jews* went to rebuild the Temple, and laid their Arms down by them, they were ſo terrified, that the Enemy oblig'd them to deſiſt. And they were very ſenſible of the Fury of their Enemies, when the *Gracians* and *Romans* aſſaulted them. *Daniel*, further ſays, *That after ſixty and two Weeks ſhall* Meſſiah *be cut off, but not for himſelf*, which is meant of *Agrippa* the laſt King of the *Jews*. For he was ſlain at *Rome* by *Veſpaſian*, as his Son *Mumbas* was three Years and a half before the Deſtruction of the Temple, as *Joſephus* teſtifies; the Expreſſion, *not for himſelf*, ſignifies the End of the Kingdom, for after him the *Jews* had no other. Then it follows, *the People of the Prince that ſhall come, ſhall deſtroy the City and the Sanctuary*. Experience alſo ſhew'd this: For both the City and the Temple were deſtroy'd by *Titus*; but the Cauſe of the Deſtruction of the Temple was aſcrib'd to the Soldiers, becauſe the Emperour all along ſhew'd a Deſire to ſave it. Next is added, *The end thereof ſhall be with a Flood, and unto the End of the War Deſolations are determin'd*. For from the beginning to the End of the War (eſpecially while the Seige laſted) the *Jews* ſuf-

ſet'd on all ſides, both without and within. For not only the Beſiegers, but the Beſieged deſtroy'd the City, till at length it was quite burnt down.

The laſt diſtinction of the Weeks is imply'd in theſe words, *And he ſhall confirm the Covenant with many for one Week.* For *Titus* very often made overtures of Peace to the *Jews* (in thoſe 7 Years that the War continu'd) upon condition they would obey, and become Tributaries to the *Romans*, as *Joſephus* relates: *And in the midſt of the Week he ſhall cauſe the Sacrifice, and the Oblation to ceaſe.* This likewiſe ſo fell out, for by reaſon of the conſtant and terrible War the Prieſts omitted to offer Sacrifice for three Years and a half together. *And for the overſpreading of Abominations he ſhall make it deſolate.* Thus, that place which before was conſecrated to the Service of God, ſhall become a Receptacle of Filthineſs and Idolatry. Here this Revelation concludes, by which God informs *Daniel*, that the Captivity of *Babylon* was now over, but notwithſtanding that, the *Jews* were to undergo a ſeverer Slavery, and to endure all the diſmal Calamities and preſſing Evils, which were foretold ſhould fall upon them under the fourth Monarchy.

The *Jews* of this Age interpret this Prophecy ſeveral ways, but when we reflect

ſlect upon the obſcurity of it, we need not wonder at their various Opinions. There were ſome who imagin'd, that after the Concluſion of the ſeventy Weeks, the *Meſſias* would appear, and deliver to them the Dominion of the whole World. This was the Opinion of thoſe who engag'd againſt the *Romans* at that time. And though they were expos'd to many great Dangers and Hardſhips, yet their Expectation of the *Meſſias* continued, becauſe they fanſied, that he would come in the midſt of all their Afflictions. Wherefore thoſe words, *To finiſh the Tranſgreſſion*, they ſo expound, as if after the end of the ſeventy Weeks, their Sins ſhould be forgiven them. Others that diſſent from theſe, underſtand the Prophecy of the Deſtruction of the *Jews*; and for that Reaſon would not fight at all. But when *Titus* was Succeſsful, they acknowledged him for their Sovereign. And theſe the rather ſeem to accommodate the Prophecy to *Veſpaſian*, becauſe of the unhappy Fortune of their Countrey. *F. Joſephus* is of this Opinion, in the Wars of the *Jews*, *B.* 7. *c.* 12. His words are theſe: *That which chiefly encourag'd them to go to War, was an obſcure Prophecy (recorded in the Scripture) that one of their Neighbouring Princes, ſhould be Maſter of all the World about that time. Some under-*

underſtood it of themſelves, and many wiſe Men were deceiv'd by this Interpretation: For in truth, the Prophecy clearly meant the Empire of Veſpaſian, *who was created Emperor in Judæa. But there are ſome Men that can't avoid their fate, though they foreſee it. So ſome interpreted the Signs one way, and ſome another, till their Folly was confuted by their own, and their Countries ruin.* To this belongs the Obſervation of *Tacitus, B.* 5. of his Hiſtory. *A great many were perſwaded, that the Prieſts in their Writings foretold, that about this time, the Eaſt ſhould grow powerful, and that the* Jews *ſhould be Lords of the World: Now theſe obſcure places only meant* F. Veſpaſian, *and* Titus. *But the common People, (as Men uſually wiſh) interpreted this mighty Succeſs to themſelves; in Caſe it ſhould ſo fall out in the midſt of their Calamities.* *Suetonius* alſo takes notice of this Prophecy, in the Life of Veſpaſian *c.* 4. *It was* (ſays he) *firmly believ'd all over the Eaſt, that, at this time, the* Jews *ſhould enjoy an univerſal Dominion. This (though foretold of the* Roman *Emperors, and was verified in the Event) the* Jews *underſtood of themſelves, and ſo rebell'd; and having ſlain the Governour, they alſo routed the Forces that the Deputy of* Syria, *was bringing for his Aſſiſtance.* *Servius* likewiſe (in his Commentaries upon *Virgil's Æneids, B.* 4.)

B. 4.) tells us, That *Suetonius* (in his Life *of Cæſar*) ſays, *That the Oracles all over the World declar'd, that the invincible Emperour was born.*

Now moſt of the wiſe and prudent Men, being of this Opinion, *Joſephus* (who was a diſcreet Man, and underſtood the Scriptures very well) thought that after *Jotapata* was taken, the Power of the *Jews* was quite extinct. Therefore he acquainted *Veſpaſian* (as if it had been reveal'd to him from Heaven) that the Prophets foretold he ſhould be an Emperour. Not that I believe *Joſephus* had the Spirit of Prophecy, for that no one had (as the ancients affirm) under the ſecond Temple, but he ſaid this, to ingratiate himſelf with *Veſpaſian*. For when *Jotapata* was taken within forty ſeven days, according to his Prediction, and when by a wonderful Sagacity he foreſaw that the *Romans* would take *Jeruſalem*, he ſo manag'd his Diſcourſe and his Affairs, that he was ſure his Prophecy would be Credited. Several of the *Jews* believ'd that *Jeruſalem* could not be taken, but by one that was to be an univerſal Monarch. Hence we read in the *Talmud*, that R. *Johanan Ben Zachai* making his Eſcape out of the City (for fear of the Seditions that were within) was apprehended, and being brought before

Veſpa-

Veſpaſian, he ſaluted him Emperour; but when the Emperour denied that he was the Perſon, he told him, That he was, and that he was appointed ſo by a Divine Prophecy. For *Iſaiah* ſays, Chap. 10. 34. *And Lebanon ſhall fall by a mighty one*, i. e. by one that Rules over all the World. Thus we ſee the Completion of this Prophecy.

7. Now while *Daniel* was much troubled about the Afflictions that would fall upon the *Jews* under the four Monarchies, God was pleas'd to raiſe his ſinking Spirits, by the Prophecy of a particular happy Condition that they were to enjoy, Dan. 11. 2 *Behold there ſhall ſtand up yet three Kings in Perſia, and the fourth ſhall be far richer than they all.* i. e. There ſhall be but three Kings of *Perſia* after *Cyrus*. Some Men pretend to prove out of Hiſtory, that there were fourteen Kings of *Perſia*, others that there were but ſeven. But their miſtake proceeds from this, becauſe they make *Cyrus* to be the firſt, whenhe was the Eleventh; to whom ſucceeded *Cambyſes*, *Artaxerxes* and *Darius*, and theſe are the three which the Prophet means. Now *Darius* deſcending from the *Jews* by his Mother's ſide, he gave them leave to build the Temple, and commanded *Ezra* to teach the People out of the Law of *Moſes*;

ſes; and *Nehemiah* was to take Care of the building of the Walls. But *Darius* aſſecting the Empire of *Greece*, was unfortunately ſlain by *Alexander* the Great. Furthermore, *Daniel* ſays, v. 2. *A mighty King ſhall ſtand up*, (i. e. Alexander) *and ſhall be divided towards the four winds of Heaven*, v. 3. *i. e.* in reſpect of thoſe who ſucceeded him. The Prophet alſo foretels ſeveral other things, as concerning *Seleucus*, the King of the *Aſſyrians* and *Babylonians*, and *Ptolemy Lagus*. This is enough concerning the Completion of ſome Prophecies, whoſe Events certainly depended upon *Man's Free-will*; from hence we conclude, That God not only foreknows thoſe things, which he determin'd to do after ſome extraordinary manner, but likewiſe future Contingencies.

Hither we may refer what *Joſephus* ſays, *B.* 10. *c ult.* Daniel *wrote after the ſame manner, concerning the* Roman *Empire, and the Deſtruction of* Jeruſalem. *All theſe things that were reveal'd to him by God, he wrote down, and left to Poſterity; that when they ſaw what he foretold, was punctually fulfill'd*, they might wonder that God ſhould have ſo ſignal a Regard for him; and that the Errour of the Epicureans might be confuted, who will not allow of Providence, and deny that God governs

governs the World, but only aſſert that it moves by a natural *Impetus*; now if this wanted a Director (as they ſay) even as we ſee Ships caſt away for lack of a Pilot, and Chariots overturn'd and broken that have none to guide them, ſo would this alſo be deſtroy'd by its own immoderate Motion.

For this Reaſon, when I reflect upon the Prophecies of *Daniel*, I can't forbear condemning the Ignorance of thoſe Perſons, who deny God's Providence over humane Affairs; for how could his Prophecies be fulfill'd, if all things were careleſly, and indifferently manag'd? This is my Opinion, and if any Man be of another, let him enjoy it.

I have but briefly mention'd theſe things, but if any one deſires to ſee all the Controverſies of the *Jews*, about the Explication of *Daniel*'s Prophecies; he may read *Abravanel*'s Treatiſe, which the Learned *Buxtorf* has tranſlated into Latine. But this muſt be acknowledg'd, that all Prophecies are obſcure, and the meaning of them can't be underſtood, till the Completion of them. It is God's Pleaſure that they ſhould be ſo, that there may be room for Free will in all our Actions. For if Men knew that any thing would neceſſarily, and inevitably fall out, according to God's

God's decree, they would deſpair of good, and be careleſs about that which was Evil; but that they might never be dejected, God is pleas'd ſecretly to Act with Men in his Prophecies.

SECT. 7. Some there are, who deny God's Preſcience, upon the Account of theſe, and the like Expreſſions, that we meet with in the Scripture. *Now I know that thou feareſt God*, Gen. 22. 12. *And the Lord came down to ſee the City*, 11. 5. and in another place, *I will go down and ſee*, 18. 21. from theſe Paſſages they Fanſie it may be prov'd, That God does not foreknow future Contingencies. But if the Reader pleaſes to look into my *Reconciler* upon *Geneſis*, he may meet with Satisfaction concerning ſuch ſort of Phraſes. This I muſt repeat in ſhort, that wiſe Men uſually expreſs themſelves after this manner, when out of two Evils they would chuſe the leaſt; and this is the Caſe here. For, when God knows all things before hand, that which he foreknows, he muſt either publickly and particularly diſcover it, or propoſe it under ambiguous Phraſes. If the firſt, then Men, knowing the Decrees of God, would be very careleſs about their Life. If the latter, then Expreſſions, leſs becoming God,

God, muſt be us'd; now which method does he prefer? Why, he chuſes rather to ſpeak, as if he was ignorant of what will come to paſs, becauſe he would condeſcend to our Capacities, and uſe a leſs accurate form of Speech, that he might not abridge the Freedom of our Actions. After the ſame manner the Scripture aſcribes to God, Eyes, Hands, *&c.* not becauſe he has ſuch Members (for he is incorporeal) but only to denote his Providence and his Power. *Maimonides* and others ſay, that the Law ſpeaks *after the manner of Men*, that it may be the better underſtood. Another ſort of Men object, that if God knows all future Contingencies, and takes care of the World; why then do good Men ſuffer and wicked Men Proſper? This was anſwer'd before out of the Prophets. The Pſalmiſt alſo takes notice of this, *Pſal.* 73. 11, 12, 13, *&c.* *and Malachy, Chap.* 3. 14.

But *David* expreſſes himſelf thus, Pſal. 94. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. *They ſlay the Widow and the Stranger, and Murder the Fatherleſs. Yet they ſay the Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of Jacob regard it. Underſtand, O ye brutiſh among the People; and, ye Fools, when will ye be wiſe? He that planted the Ear, ſhall he not hear? He that formed the Eye, ſhall he not ſee? He that teacheth Man know-*

knowledge, ſhall not he know? Upon this, *Maimonides* in his Directory tells us, *That two eminent Phyſicians (who wonder'd at theſe words) ſaid, If we may argue after this manner, it would follow then that he who made the Mouth may eat; he that form'd the Lungs may ſpeak, &c. But pray obſerve, (Courteous Reader) and I will inform you, how much they miſtake the Senſe of this Argument.*

It muſt be granted, that an Artificer can make no Tool, unleſs he knows the uſe of it: As for inſtance, A Needle-maker could not make a Needle in that ſhape, which is fit for ſowing, except he knew the uſe that it was to be put to, and the ſame may be ſaid of other Inſtruments. Now ſome of the Philoſophers imagin'd, that God can't apprehend ſome particular things, becauſe they are not the Objects of Senſe. To theſe I anſwer, that God's Perception of things is not ſenſual, but intellectual. Therefore I'll deduce my Argument againſt them thus, from the Exiſtence of the Senſes. If God was ignorant how Viſion is perform'd, how could he form the Eye? Is it probable, that all the various Humours of that Organ, ſhould be contriv'd by Chance? In a word, can any wiſe Man believe, that all the Humours, Coats, and Optick Nerves, (which are ſo nicely diſpos'd, and perform the Act of Viſion) could be ſituated in that poſture accidentally;

No, they are thus deſign'd by Nature, as Phyſicians, and Philoſophers confeſs. Now Nature, they alſo acknowledge, is not endu'd with an Intellectual, and commanding Fatulty. But this Order, this Management, (which is like that of an ingenious Work-man) proceeds, they ſay, from an intellectual Principle, and according to my Opinion, is the reſult of an underſtanding Being, which is the Author of all the natural Faculties, that Creatures are qualifi'd with. Now if this Intellectual Being, is ignorant of this thing, and does not perceive it, how could Nature be deriv'd from it, that deſigns an Effect which ſhe knows nothing of? Therefore David *juſtly calls theſe Men Brutes, and Fools,* Pſal. 94 8. Hitherto *Maimonides.* As for what relates to the Adverſity of good Men in this Life, I have largely Diſcours'd of it in my *Reconciler* upon *Geneſis.*

SECT. 8. Three things remain, which I ſhall diſpatch with Expedition. 1. I am to prove that Man is created with a Free-will, and that it is in his Power to make Choice of Life or Death. 2. That God's Concurrence is neceſſary in humane Actions; for, a Divine Aſſiſtance, beſides Man's endeavour, is requir'd in order to Salvation. 3. That God wiſely governs our Actions, and directs them to ſuch an end,

end, that makes us capable of Rewards or Puniſhments.

Reaſon is enough to convince us, That Men are endu'd with Free-will. *Maimonides* ſays, Why are there Laws? Why Affirmative, and Negative Precepts? Do not theſe plainly ſhew us, That if Man pleaſes he may obtain Salvation by vertuous Actions, or utterly ruin himſelf by vitious ones? No Body ever threatn'd to inflict Puniſhment upon him, who was unable to obey, or was compell'd to tranſgreſs the Law. Therefore it would be unjuſt for God to puniſh Men for that, which they muſt neceſſarily do. If there is no ſuch thing as *Free-will*, the Care of preſerving Life would ceaſe, Admonitions would be needleſs, and we muſt deny all Guilt. Let him then that is deſtin'd to be Hang'd, Kill'd, or Drown'd, diſpatch himſelf as ſoon as he can. But after all, we ſee that God does not always bleſs the ſlothful and careleſs, but the diligent and induſtrious. Man's Condition (ſays St. *Cyril*) would be worſe than that of Brutes, if theſe acted by inſtinct, and thoſe by force. What ſignifie (ſays *Cicero*) Laws, Friends, and good Advice? There's no Man (ſays R. *Joſeph Albo*) who would take care of his Life, or regard his Actions, if he had not *Free-will*. But Expe-

rience evinces the contrary, for Houſes, Towns, Arms, Traffick, Husbandry and ſuch like are not Signs of Security, but *Sollicitude*. The Scripture likewiſe atteſts this, becauſe in that we read, that *Adam* at the beginning was endu'd with *Free-will*, and for that Reaſon excell'd all other Creatures; for the Sun neceſſarily, and always ſhines, the Fire burns, and Water moiſtens; but Man can do what he pleaſes. In this reſpect alſo Man is ſaid to be made after the *Image of God*. Neither is it uſual for God to command the performance of any thing, which is not in Man's Power to do or let alone. Therefore it was neceſſary that *Adam* ſhould have a *Free-will*, when God forbid him to eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, leſt I ſhould ſay God was unjuſt (which is Blaſphemy to imagine) when he puniſh'd him, if he had it not.

This is the Opinion of all the *Talmudiſts*, and for this Reaſon they ſay, *We find from the Law, the Prophets, and other Holy Writers, that a Man can walk in which way he pleaſes.*

It is thus prov'd by them, Firſt, out of the Law, where God had ſaid to *Balaam*, Numb. 22. 12. *Thou ſhalt not go with them, Thou ſhalt not Curſe the People*; nevertheleſs he knowing that he was reſolv'd to go, permitted him. Then out of the Prophets,

phets, Iſaiah 48. 17. *I am the Lord thy God, which teacheth thee to Profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou ſhouldſt go.* As if he ſhould ſay, I will always Conduct you in the right way, but if you will not regard me, and will go wrong, I will leave you to your *Free-will.* Laſtly, out of the Holy Writers, Prov. 3. 34. *Surely he ſcorneth the Scorners, but he giveth Grace unto the lowly.*

From whence it appears, That God hates impious Men, for their Impiety; but he confers his Grace on the Godly and Religious. Hither alſo we may refer that ſaying of the *Talmudiſts*, Shall an idle Perſon think to leave the Care of his Affairs to God? No; for it is ſaid, Deut. 15. 10. *For this thing the Lord thy God, ſhall bleſs thee in all thy Works, and in all that thou putteſt thine hand unto.* For this Reaſon they adviſe us, that we ſhould be careful to avoid Evil, and chooſe Good; becauſe they are both in our Power.

Hence this is a common Proverb among them, *When the Peſtilence rages in the City, make haſt and get out of it.* And they believe, that this is intimated in the words of *Iſaith*, Chap. 26. 20. So it is twice repeated in the *Proverbs*, Chap. 22. 3. 27. 12. *A prudent Man foreſeeth the Evil, and hideth himſelf, but the ſimple paſs on, and are puniſh'd*

niſh'd. Upon this Account the *Jews* are exceeding induſtrious in the time of a Plague, to take Care of themſelves, for which they incurr the Cenſures of ſome.

Plato, *Ariſtotle*, and other Philoſophers, (who had only the Light of Nature) were of this Opinion. *Plato* ſays, that Free-will is the Privilege that Men have above all other Creatures. Therefore we ſee that all Men are very diligent in their Profeſſions, that they defend themſelves againſt their Enemies, and by all ways ſhun Evil, and follow that which is Good. We ſee alſo, that a Man is blam'd or commended (and that juſtly) upon the Account of his method of Acting, the end that he propoſes, and the means that he uſes. We never find fault with a Child, or one that is aſleep, or a Fool, for doing any Body a miſchief; but if we Judge by the Event, they deſerve Reprehenſion as well as other People; from whence it follows, that all Men agree, That no Perſon is to be prais'd, or reprov'd, but he that Acts voluntarily and deliberately. So that if a Man has not Free will, Advice, Reproof, Reward and Puniſhment are vain and ineffectual.

When therefore it is ſaid in the Scripture, Prov. 16. 4. *The Lord hath made all things for himſelf*; *ſome interpret it, that all the works of the Lord manifeſt his Perfection and Power.*

Power. *Maimonides* ſays the meaning is, *According to his Will*, then is added, *yea even the wicked for the day of Evil.* As much as to ſay, God hath created all things for his own Glory; and therefore when he puniſheth wicked Men, he manifeſts the Glory of his Juſtice. But in my Judgment the meaning is, God created all things *for himſelf*, i. e. That they might ſerve him; for the wicked is like a Rod in the hand of God, with which he chaſtiſeth the ungodly: Such an one was *Nebuchednezzar*, by whom he Corrected the rebellious and diſobedient *Jews*.

But leſt any one ſhould be impos'd upon by the ſaying of *R. Jehuda*, That *from our Formation in the Womb, our Marriage with ſuch a Perſon, is unalterably determin'd.* We muſt take notice, that *Maimonides* affirms that Matrimony is reckon'd among the Precepts, and therefore no one is compell'd to Marry ſuch or ſuch a Perſon, becauſe God has not preciſely predeſtinated any one to the obſervance of the Precepts. Beſides, it is expreſly commanded in the Law, Deut. 20. 7. *That a Man that hath betroth'd a Wife, and hath not taken her, ſhall not go in the Battel, leſt he die, and another take her.* Now if this Marriage was immutably determin'd, how could his Wife be married to another?

Furthermore, we muſt underſtand, that the *Cabbaliſts* are of Opinion, that at the beginning of the World, Souls were made by Pares, *i. e.* a Male and a Female together; and for this Reaſon they affirm, that Matrimony is either allotted as a Reward, or a Puniſhment according to Mens Actions. So if a Man is religious and deſerving, he is joyn'd to that Perſon, who was created with him. But if not, (for his Puniſhment) he is wedded to one that is very diſagreeable to his Humour, and proves a Scold, and a Trouble to him as long as ſhe lives. Therefore, they ſay, That Parents ſometimes ſell all that they have, to marry their Children to a diſcreet and ſober Perſon. And that whoſoever rather marries for Vertue and Honeſty, than for Beauty, God bleſſes him, and ſends him many Children. Now all this actually depends upon Man's *Free-will.*

SECT. 9. So much for Man's *Free-will*; I ſhall now treat of God's Concurrence with humane Actions. All the *Jews* agree in this, that God concurs with vertuous Actions, both by aſſiſting them, and promoting them; for his Aid is neceſſary to their Perfection. Hence our *Rabbins* ſay, That as ſoon as ever a Man ſets about a good Action, he has God's aſſiſtance.

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Hence comes that Saying of their's, when they ſpeak about the Conteſt, which is between the rational and ſenſual Appetite, *Without God's ſuccour, it is impoſſible to ſubdue the ſenſual Appetite.* To this agrees what *Hoſea* ſaith, Chap. 13. 9. *O Iſrael thou haſt deſtroy'd thy ſelf, but in me is thine help.* There the Prophet ſhews that wickedneſs ſprings from a Man's ſelf, but that every good Action is from God, as the aſſiſting Cauſe; upon this Account the Pſalmiſt addreſſes himſelf thus to God, Pſal. 79. 9. *Help us O God of our Salvation,* and *Jeremiah,* Lament. 5. 21. *Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we ſhall be turned,* So *Solomon, Prov.* 20. 24. upon which a Learned *Rabbi* ſays, though Man has underſtanding, nevertheleſs God's aſſiſtance is neceſſary for him. Thus *David* ſays, *Pſ.* 37. 23. *The ſteps of a good Man are order'd by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way,* as much as to ſay, God indeed perfects our Actions, but Man alſo has a Duty to perform. Becauſe we owe all the Good we have to God; therefore we are oblig'd to Honour him with it, Thus the Pſalmiſt rightly obſerves, *Pſal.* 65. 4. *Bleſſed is the Man whom thou chooſeſt, and cauſeſt to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts,* i.e. in Heaven, and in the Company of Saints. Give me leave to explain this by an Example. I will pitch upon *Joſeph* and *Tarquin.*

quin. This being in love with a pretty Lady, committed Adultery with her; the other ſeeing the Beauty of his wanton Miſtreſs, bravely and piouſly refus'd to lie with her.

Now what was the Cauſe of the different and contrary Motions in theſe two Perſons? Without doubt the regular Appetite of this, and the depraved one of t'other; for becauſe *Tarquin* was wholly lead away by his Luſts, and deſpis'd Chaſtity, God left him to his vitious Deſires; but becauſe *Joſeph*'s Inclinations were virtuous and chaſt, God diſcover'd to him the Filthineſs of the Act, the Injury to his Maſter, and the Torments of Hell; and by the Conſideration of theſe things, God aſſiſted him, and prevented the Commiſſion of ſo notorious a Sin: Hence the *Rabbins* us'd to ſay upon thoſe words, *Gen.* 39. 10. *He hearken'd not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her:* He would not lie with her in this World, leſt he ſhould ſuffer with her in the next. Now becauſe theſe Actions depended upon both their Free-wills, therefore one deſerves Eternal Praiſe and Glory, and the other Everlaſting Diſgrace and Ruine. If we allow any ſuch thing as Rewards and Puniſhments, we muſt neceſſarily admit of Free-will. Wherefore God always ſupports and helps thoſe Perſons that mind their Duty, and

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are induſtrious, but diſregards the Lazy and Slothful.

SECT. 10. As to the third thing I am to prove, *Maimonides* affirms, that if men's Sins are very heinous and notorious there is no room for Repentance; and in confirmation of his Opinion he us'd to alledge that of *Iſaiah* 6. 10. and 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. So that according to him, God harden'd the Heart of *Pharaoh* for his Sins, *Exod.* 14. 4. Likewiſe *Sihon* and *Og* King of *Baſan* were ſo wicked, that their Repentance could not avert their Puniſhment. Agreeable to this Opinion it is, that God ſometimes takes away *Free-will* from Sinners. Certain it is that God deprives Men of their Eſtates, Honours, Life and Liberty for their Iniquities. The Ancients too were of this Mind. But what we read in *Tanhuma*, is worth our Obſervation. Three things, ſays the Author, God has put into our Power, *viz.* our *Hands*, *Feet and Mouth*, and there are three things which are not in our Power, *viz.* our Eyes, Ears and Noſe; for we ſee, hear, and ſmell many things that are offenſive to us. God oftentimes debars us the uſe of thoſe things which are in our Power, by reaſon of our Sins. Thus God wither'd the Hand of *Jeroboam*, which he reach'd out to ſeize the Prophet; and made

made *Balaam* bleſs the *Iſraelites*, whom he deſign'd to curſe. Therefore it is evident, that God very often obſtructs Men's Actions, and can abridge their Power. Hence *Abravanel* confeſſes, that when God intends to reward or puniſh any Perſon, nothing can prevent it. An inſtance of this he ſays we have, in the Infatuation of *Achitophel*, becauſe God was reſolv'd to puniſh *Abſolom*. To this belong the words of *Jerem.* 10. 23. 2 *Sam.* 17. 14. *Iſa.* 14. 27. *Iſaac Arama* is of opinion, that Repentance is never too late: For, ſays he, it is always acceptable to God. But he affirms, that for the Murder of our Neighbour, Repentance is ineffectual, and therefore we can't eſcape Puniſhment for that.

If I may have leave to declare my Judgment in this Caſe, I do firmly believe that God never forces, or takes away the uſe of our Free-will, but always mercifully diſpoſes the means, as they are more or leſs agreeable to our inclinations; like the *primum mobile*, which carries round the inferiour Orbs, yet every one of them hath a diſtinct Motion. I ſhall illuſtrate my meaning by this Example, God deſign'd that the *Iſraelites* ſhould continue in the *Egyptian* Bondage ſo many Years, and that *Joſeph* ſhould be advanc'd above all his Brethren. Now God compell'd no body to accom-

accompliſh this Deſign; but he only ſo order'd the means, that *Joſeph* might be ſold to the *Midianitiſh* Merchants, and then this way he might come into *Egypt*. In like manner God intended to diſplay the miraculous Signs of his Power among the *Egyptians*, but how? by hardening *Pharaoh's* Heart, ſo that he ſhould have no uſe of his Free-will? No, but by ſo contriving it, that the King might have occaſion, by the free Uſe, or rather the Abuſe, of his Will, of hardening his Heart. Thus when he ſaw his own Magicians work the ſame Miracles which *Moſes's* did, he diſregarded them. He perceiv'd that the Plagues could be eaſily remov'd, and ſo was not much concern'd at them; but obſtinately refus'd to diſmiſs the People, till he was ſurpriz'd with the Slaughter of his Son, and all the Firſt-born of his Subjects. Thus we muſt underſtand, that God harden'd the Hearts of *Sihon* and *Og* the King of *Baſan*: For the *Iſraelites* had ſent Meſſengers to the *Edomites*, the *Ammonites*, and the *Moabites*, to requeſt a Paſſage through the Borders of their Country, but being deny'd, they went another way. Now *Sihon* and *Og* expected that they would do the ſame to them, but when they ſaw they would not, they took up Arms and ſtiffly oppos'd their Paſſage, but unhappily, for they

they were presently conquer'd. Here God only gave an opportunity to their perverſeneſs, but did not in the leaſt force their *Wills*, that he might puniſh them. God alſo determin'd to divide *Solomon's* Kingdom, but which way did he effect it? not by compelling *Rehoboam*, but by giving occaſion, that by the Advice of his young Counſellours (by whom he was directed) he might refuſe to leſſen the People's Taxes, and ſo *Abijah's* Prophecy was fulfill'd. Thus I think all the Places, where God ſeems to deprive Man of his Free-will that he may puniſh him, may be explain'd.

For as Princes know how wiſely and prudently to manage their Affairs, that they may obtain their Deſigns: So does God (who is the King of Heaven and Earth) in like manner diſpoſe all things (without impairing our Free-wills) that he may effect his Reſolutions, that he may mercifully recompence ſome, and juſtly puniſh others. To this belong the words of *Solomon*, Prov. 21. 1. *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the Rivers of Water, he inclineth it whitherſoever he will.* He does not ſay, he forceth, but inclineth; and this is all that I propos'd to prove.

SECT. 11. There ſtill remains one difficult and intricate Queſtion, which I will endea-

endeavour to ſolve; and it is this. How can Man's Free-will and God's Fore-knowledge be reconcil'd together. This ſeem'd inexplicable to *Cajetan*, very crabbed to *Vaſquez*, and the *Jews* unanimouſly confeſs, that it is very abſtruſe. Hence *Maimonides* ſays, that God's Knowledge is not an *Accident* (as Man's is) but is the very Eſſence of God. Wherefore as Men can't comprehend the Eſſence of God (according to that in *Exod.* 33. 20. *There ſhall no man ſee me and live:*) So neither can they apprehend how God fore-knows things, *Iſaiah* 55. 8. It is evident (ſays the ſame Author) that Men have Free-will, and no Body doubts but God knew all things from Eternity, but it is ſtill a Queſtion how God knows things, and yet Man have the Liberty of his Will. For to enquire which way God knows things, is as much as to deſire the Knowledge of God himſelf, both which cannot be attain'd in this Life. To this belongs the Anſwer of *Bias*, who was ask'd how God was acquainted with humane Affairs and Actions? It is certain, ſays he, there is a God, whoſe Providence is over all; and it is likewiſe certain that we have a *Free-will*; but how God knows our Actions, is eaſie to conjecture, but difficult to explain.

R. Abra-

R. Abraham Bar David, (a Rival of *Maimonides*) ſays, that *Maimonides* indeed did propoſe the Queſtion, but did not anſwer it, and therefore he had better have let it alone. Wherefore this *Rabbi* (offering his Opinion to explain the manner of God's Preſcience) ſays, That the Aſtrologers, by looking upon the Stars, can gueſs at a great many things that will come to paſs; in like manner God knows what will happen to Men by the Courſe of the Planets, which he has ordain'd already. Now when it is in Man's Power to avoid the influence of the Stars by his good or evil Actions: He ſays, that God fore-knows that Act or Motion of his Will, and which way he deſigns to direct it. Which Preſcience, he affirms, neceſſitates, no Body's Actions. But this, (as the Author himſelf acknowledges) is not a ſatisfactory Anſwer to the Queſtion.

Wherefore *R. Iſaac Bar Sefat* in my mind, advances the cleareſt Solution. God, ſays he, from Eternity order'd all the Affairs of the whole World, and by his Divine Wiſdom and Sagacity ſaw all the Effects that ever would be produc'd; which tho' they may depend (I ſpeak of humane Actions) upon Man's Free-will, to exiſt, or not to exiſt; yet nevertheleſs, God infallibly and certainly fore-ſaw, and fore-

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knew them. Man does not act after this or that manner, because God knew beforehand that he would; but on the contrary, because Man acts so and so, therefore God knew it from Eternity. This is the Opinion of *R. Isaac Arama*, *Justin Martyr*, *Origen*, *Damascene*, *Chrysostom*, *Hierom*, *Augustine*, and *Cyril*. This Solution I firmly embrace my self. Here is the Case, if a Person being plac'd upon an high Tower, or Mountain, sees one Man go from South to North, another from North to South; by this Act of Vision he does not necessitate the voluntary Motion of those Men; so it is here. For God's Eternity is correspondent, to the distance of Places; for he knew all things from Eternity, as if they were but just done. I will explain it by another Similitude; let us suppose a Circle, from whose Center may be drawn several Lines to the Circumference; Now in respect of this Circumference we may consider a first and a last, or a distance between these Lines, which in respect of the Center is none at all; so in reference to God, there is no such thing as first and last, past and future, but all things are present to him. And this, I believe, *Mercurius Trismegistus* means, when he compares God to a Center, and a Circumference, in respect of his wonderful Prescience. And if we reflect upon what *Mai-*

monides ſaid before, that our Knowledge is not like God's; he means nothing elſe, but that God knows things after a more excellent manner, than Men do; for he equally ſees things that are paſt, future, and preſent, but we only thoſe that are preſent. Therefore he ſays, it is very difficult for a humane Underſtanding to comprehend the manner how God fore-knows things, becauſe his Knowledge is not diſtinct from his Eſſence.

SECT. 12. Becauſe the Authority of the Sacred Writings are to be preferr'd before all Reaſon and Experience, I deſign for the Eſtabliſhment of this Opinion, to produce the Words which God ſpoke to *Moſes*, near the Time of his Death, *Exod.* 31. 16. *And the Lord ſaid unto* Moſes, *behold thou ſhalt ſleep with thy Fathers, and this People will riſe up, and go a whoring after the Gods of the Strangers of the Land, whither they go to be amongſt them, and will forſake me and break my Covenant which I have made with them.*

Here is a plain Inſtance of God's fore-knowledge: And that the People might never forget it, he adds, *v.* 19. *Write ye this Song for you, and teach it the Children of* Iſrael, *&c.* That God's Preſcience does not interfere with our Free-will, or impoſe

any

any Neceſſity upon it, is plain from *v.* 21. *For I know their Imagination which they go about even now, before I have brought them into the Land which I ſware.* Behold how God's Preſcience and Man's Free-will exactly agree together. That the Will is not forc'd, is manifeſt from the Puniſhments which are inflicted on the Sinner, *v.* 21. *When many Evils and Troubles are befallen them.* That is a famous Saying of the *Rabbins, All things are ſeen, and yet Liberty is granted.*

To conclude, I will now compendiouſly ſumm up what I have treated of in this Book.

1. I have ſhew'd, that our Life has a *Term.*

2. That this may be conſider'd according to the Conſtitution of the Body, or the Planets, which variouſly act on the Body; or as ſome will have it, in general, In reſpect of the preſent and the paſt *Times.*

3. That the *Term* of Life is alterable.

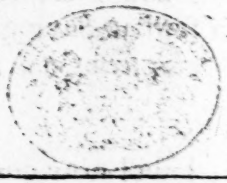
4. That man's Life may be contracted ſeveral ways, *viz.* by the Providence of God, by Nature, and by Chance.

5. That our Life may be prolong'd by the Meditation on God's Law, and the Obſervation of his Precepts; one of which

belongs to the Mind or Theory; the other to the Will or Practice.

6. That man may freely make uſe of Remedies and Phyſick when he is ſick.

7. That though God fore-knows future Contingencies, Nevertheleſs, every one may act virtuouſly or wickedly if he pleaſes.



FINIS.